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SPECIAL REPORT:
Saving America's Iconic Gardens

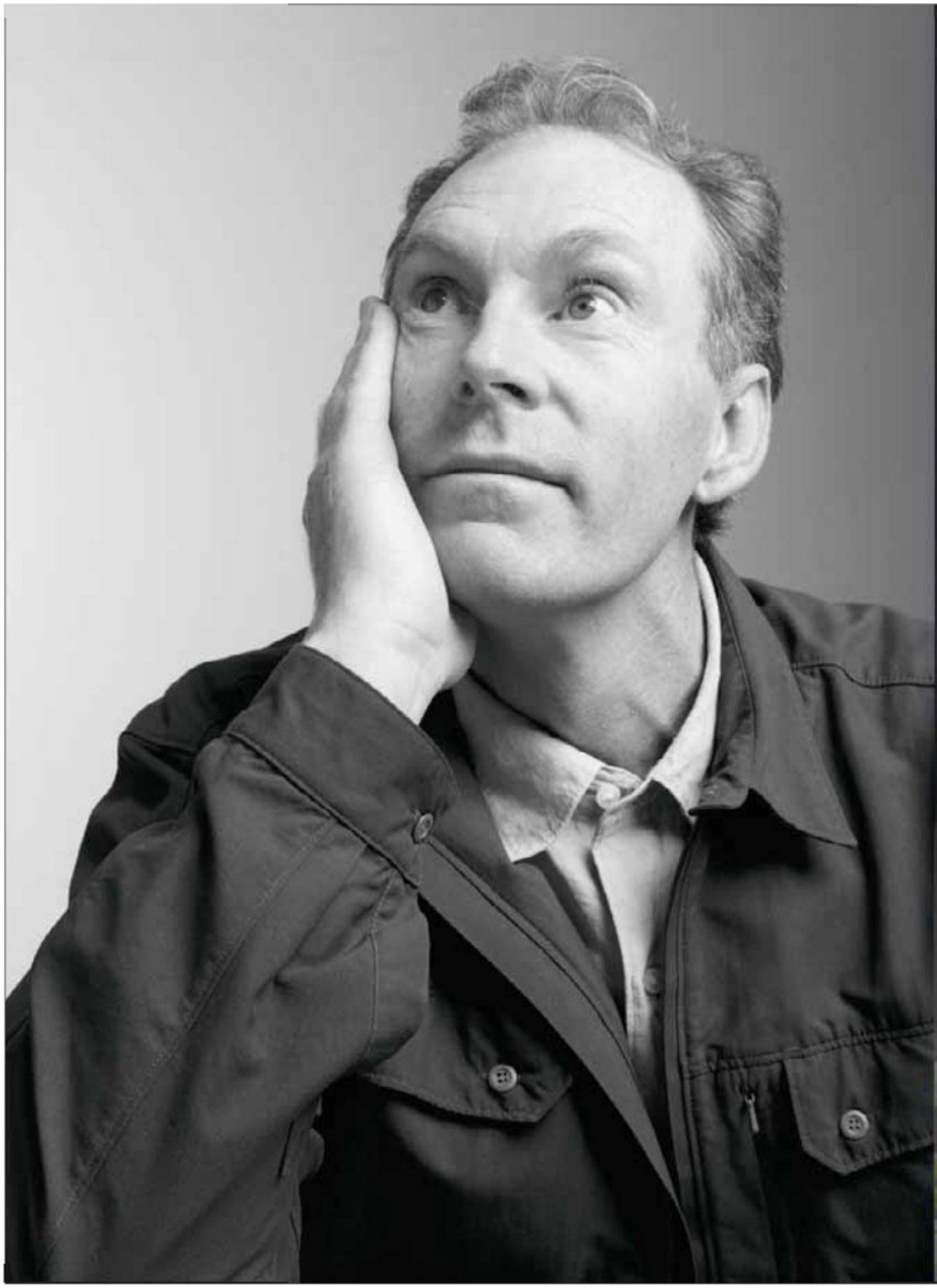
Flashy Begonias

Garden Benches, Antiques & Showers

Monrovia Style:

Presents the DREAMER

Bernard Trainor, landscape designer, utilizes his vivid imagination, along with his respect for the natural environs, to envision "the ideal garden" within the context of a given site. Passionate about meaningful landscapes, he strives to create "a sense of place" that translates to a relaxed atmosphere.

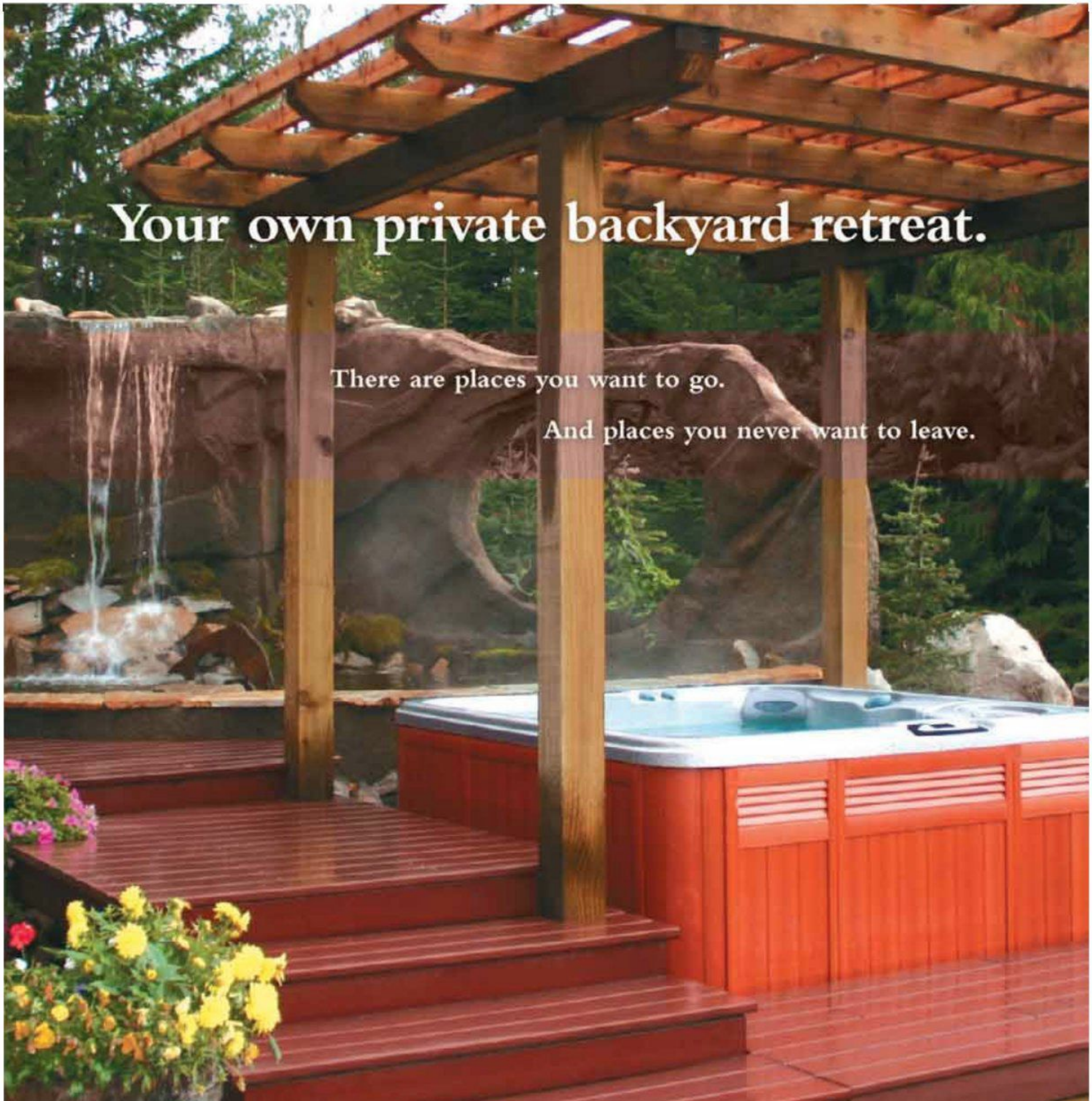


"Monrovia's diverse selection of plants inspire my arrangement of garden spaces by allowing me to design with a depth and rhythm that seamlessly connects one garden area to the next."

–Bernard Trainor


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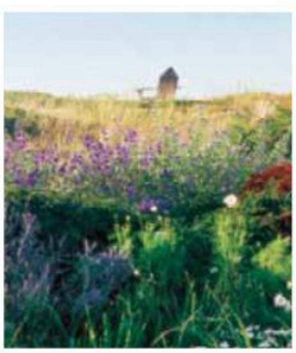


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Features

On the Cover

A low-maintenance grassy meadow on the dunes of Long Island, designed by Michael Blake, exemplifies green gardening. Part of the story on "Great Green Design" beginning on page 53. Photo by Roger Foley.



If a June night could talk, it would probably boast that it invented romance—BERN WILLIAMS

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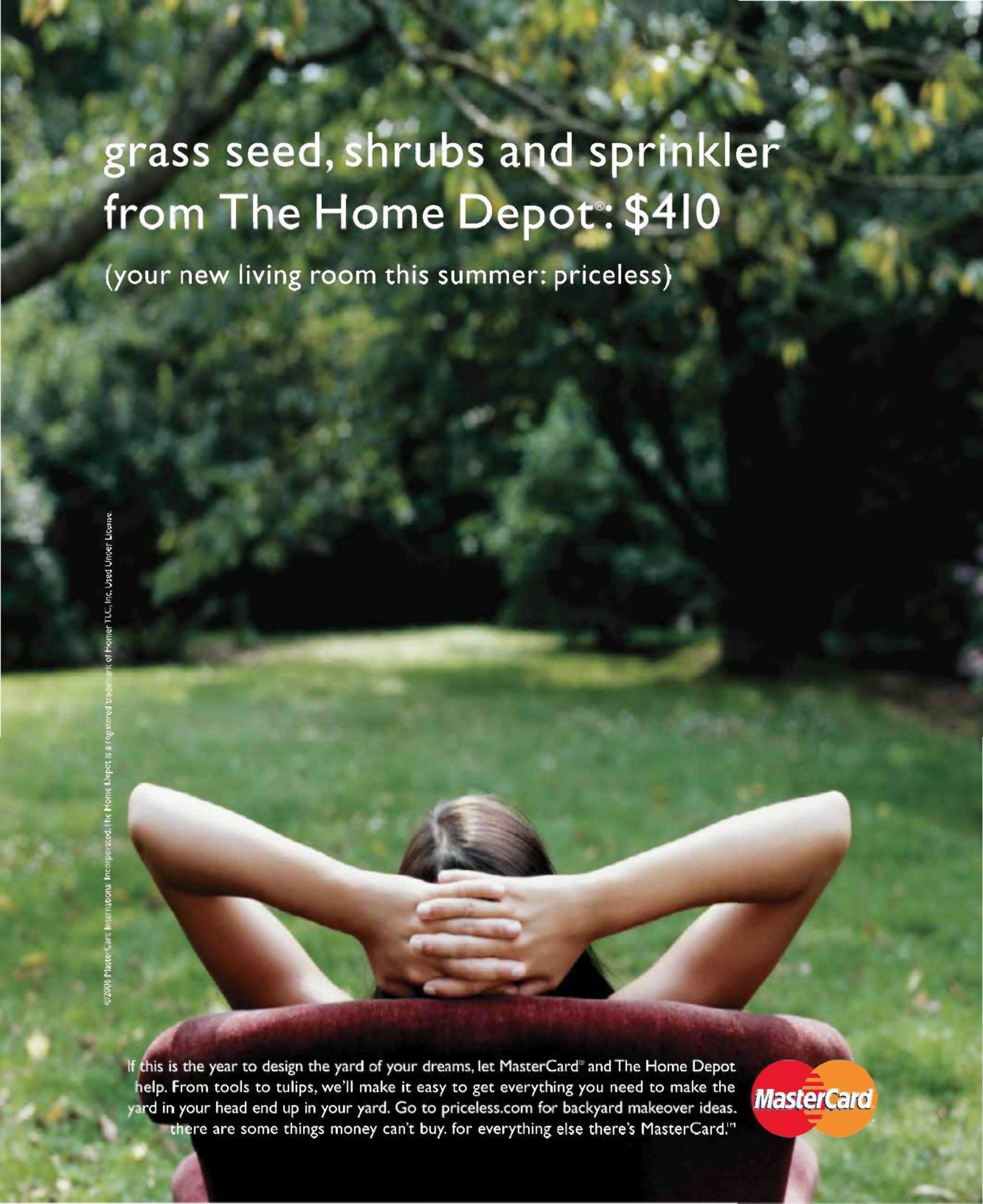
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Departments

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I sing of brooks, of blossoms, birds, and bowers: of April, May, or June, and July-flowers—ROBERT HERRICK



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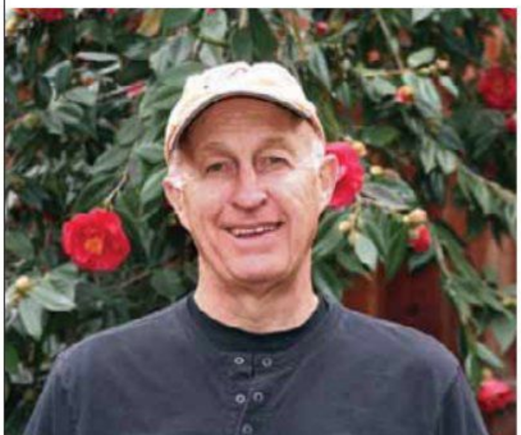
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Living Green

Remember how gaggy those "health food" stores smelled a few decades ago? I'd lose my appetite. Compare that with walking into a Whole Foods Market today, with its mouthwatering aromas, picture-perfect strawberries, organic wines and so many more temptations.

I think we've made that same leap forward with today's sustainable, earth-friendly "green" gardens. Picture the organic gardens of a few decades ago: straw on the ground, compost piles topped with banana peels, tomatoes with the inevitable worms. And then look at the green gardens beginning on page 53 of this issue. These earth-friendly spaces conserve water and redirect runoff, reduce our reliance on chemical pesticides and fertilizers, help cool buildings, call for less gas in the lawn mower—all in all, saving our precious resources for future generations.



MAIA MARKEN

And—this of course is the contemporary breakthrough—the green gardens you see here also look great, with striking design, beautiful plants and landscaping, handsome furnishings, and comfortable places for relaxing and entertaining. We are happy to say that America's top designers are leading the sustainability charge, including Edwina von Gal, Piet Oudolf and John Greenlee, among others in this issue.

I know I'm preaching to the choir here. If anyone led America toward more sustainable living, it was those who love gardens—who planted trees, encouraged birds and insects, experimented with alternatives to chemicals, grew the breakthrough plants better able to resist diseases, harvested their own vegetables because they tasted better, and were not afraid of drip irrigation.

We also should salute *Organic Gardening* magazine, whose pioneering work goes back to 1942. And have you noticed the green blitz from more mainstream magazines in the past few months? *Rolling Stone* asked in an article on global warming, "How bad will it get?" *Elle* magazine raised the question "How to create without destroying?" (One answer was "rawchic, crazy but lovable.") *Vanity Fair*, with a special section featuring the likes of Bette Midler, Mayor Daley and Martin Short, said, "Green is the future—the only future."

Bravo, fellow magazine guys! Keep at it. Hope to see you supporting sustainability and making it fashionable next year and beyond. We know that *Garden Design* and our readers are green for the long haul.

—**BILL MARKEN**, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

mailbox



Hot Seat

I love your magazine and have subscribed for several years. I am particularly interested in the Missoni outdoor line you mention on page 32 of the March issue, especially the red patio chair. Can you help me find a source for Missoni's outdoor line? —**Nancy Crumpton,** *Austin, TX*

You can call Missoni (www.missonihome.com) at 416-736-8800 or T&J Vestor at 212-719-2338.—Ed.

Soulful Succulent

Could you please identify a plant from pages 68 and 75 of the March issue's "L.A. Soul" feature story? The plant is used in cool pots on either side of a birdcage atop a low wall. (And thanks for the Way Hot 100 list also in the issue. I look forward to it each year.) —**Jean Bach,** *Camano Garden Club, Camano Island, WA*

This is an orchid cactus (sometimes incorrectly called night-blooming cereus), which is a night-blooming, epiphytic, succulent. Neither the landscape architect nor the nursery where he purchased the plant could verify the exact name, but the most common species found on the market is Epiphyllum oxypetalum.—Ed.

Not-So-Simple Table

Can you tell me the manufacturer of the table on page 77 of the April 2006 issue? I am looking for a simple table such as this for my garden.—**Beth Fisher,** *Via the Web.*

According to Rebecca Sams, owner and designer of the Eugene, Oregon, garden, the table is an original design that she had fabricated locally. "It was an intricate process," she says. "My best advice is to buddy up to a quality metalworker and discuss options with him." —Ed.



Cheers to Eucomis

There is a eucomis pictured on page 72 of the April 2006 issue. Could you tell me which one, please? It is the purple foliage plant in the upper photo. Thanks. I am a longtime subscriber and love your magazine. —**Micki Kuhlmann,** *Falls Church, VA*

The eucomis is 'Sparkling Burgundy'.—Ed.

Credits and Corrections

The French country-style garden (above) on page 89 of the May issue in the Hort Q&A by Jack Ruttle was designed by Freeland and Sabrina Tanner of Proscape Landscape Design in Napa Valley. 707-226-2540; proscape@sbcglobal.net.

In that same issue in the "Weekend Tropicals" story beginning on page 94, we should have mentioned the contribution of gardener Rhoda Maurer, who is shown at left hanging a giant spider plant in the Nutley, New Jersey, garden.

In the May issue's feature story about Santa Barbara ["La Dolce Vita"] on page 71, we incorrectly listed the website of Casa del Herrero in Montecito. The correct address is www.casadelherrero.com.

ANDRE BARANOWSKI; JERRY PAVIA

We all learn by experience but some of us have to go to summer school—PETER DE VRIES



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Rainbow floral foam in its powdered form easily pours into odd-shaped containers like these parfait glasses. Layering colors can add a new dimension to arrangements. In its block form (below) it can be cut into smaller cubes or even shapes like hearts.

Not a Mirage

Oasis floral foam has celebrated its 50th birthday, and new ideas keep coming



AMONG FLORAL DESIGNERS IT'S UBIQUITOUS—that green block of foam tucked out of sight at the base of arrangements. Although virtually weightless when dry, put in a bucket of water its unquenchable thirst creates a waterlogged life-support system for bouquets. This shy material known as Oasis® floral foam is actually the epitome of entrepreneurial spirit and the unsung hero of garden clubs across America.

Created by inventor Vernon L. Smithers over 50 years ago, the foam was first considered for other uses. It proved to be fair as a carrier for battery acid, but it failed tests for acoustics, packaging and insulation. Smithers, owner of the rubber-testing lab Smithers Scientific in Akron, Ohio, was sure the material was good for something. One day, looking at a flower arrangement and knowing the cell structure of the foam, he thought if he could just get water into it... With a few more tweaks, eureka! Oasis was born.

Strangely the original foam was pink, but after a reality-check visit to a florist there was a quick change to green so it would take a backseat to the flowers. To arrive at the now-familiar block shape, the practical Smithers asked the post office what was the largest dimension that could be shipped via parcel post, which Smithers reduced to a

COURTESY SMITHERS-OASIS (2)

usable size. Thus 3 inches by 4 inches by 9 inches became the standard for a brick of floral foam worldwide.

Smithers believed so much in his product that at age 65 he sold his first company and started a new one focused solely on Oasis, quickly branching out to Canada and California. When a Danish florist saw Oasis at a flower show, he and Smithers opened a plant in Denmark, at first peddling the bricks of foam via bicycle to Copenhagen flower shops. Today Smithers-Oasis Company has over 20 operations around the world.

And it hasn't stopped there. Oasis has found new life in Rainbow® foam, developed in France, which comes in six colors (ivory, lime green, blue, yellow, pink and fuchsia), in bricks (easily cut into shapes) and a powdered form for odd-shaped containers that won't hold a foam block. Also new are Gardenshapes® animal topiaries, a dry foam called Sahara® for silk flowers, and trays of foam for growing cuttings and seeds.

According to current owner Charles Walton, Smithers-Oasis has an affinity for retail florists who are "paddling their own canoe," and keeps adding new ideas to provide them with everything they need. And of course lots of Oasis.—**JENNY ANDREWS**

■ *For more information see www.smithersoasis.com. Smithers-Oasis products are available at www.barbarasgardens.com and www.arrangingsupplies.com.*



Oasis floral foam need no longer hide at the bottom of a vase. It's now available in a variety of show-off colors, like ivory, pink, lime green, fuchsia, blue and yellow—called Rainbow foam.





exhibits

TWO BEAUTIFUL MINDS

What if you could see into the mind of a genius? What if you could listen in on the dialog between two such minds? Such is the case in the exhibit *Best of Friends: R. Buckminster Fuller and Isamu Noguchi*, on display through October 15 at The Noguchi Museum in Long Island City, New York.

Probably best known for designing the geodesic dome (the only structure that actually gets stronger as it gets larger), R. Buckminster Fuller was a visionary designer, engineer, philosopher, writer, architect and pioneering futurist who believed technology if properly used could dually meet mankind's needs and preserve the environment. It is Fuller we have to thank for the term "Spaceship Earth" and for bringing the concept of synergy into common use.

Critically acclaimed sculptor Noguchi brought together East and West, believing his task as an artist was to shape space, that a piece should bring out the inherent beauty of its surroundings. In addition to his outdoor sculptures, which have a tremendous range from abstract to realistic, Noguchi designed plazas, playgrounds, gardens, furniture and sets for choreographers like Martha Graham. His free-form coffee table and Akari paper lights, cleverly constructed so they can fold flat, are still in production.



Top, left to right: Noguchi's *Challenger Memorial* (1987) in Bayfront Park, Miami; Noguchi and Fuller in 1971. Above, right: Noguchi Museum.

Meeting in 1929, these two Renaissance men shared philosophical, design and engineering concepts on many projects over the next 50 years. Some are even more relevant today, such as renewable energy sources, accessible designs and green architecture. *Best of Friends* combines models, sculptures, drawings, letters and photographs to illuminate this remarkable meeting of the minds.

The 13 galleries and 8,470-square-foot garden of the Noguchi Museum serve to showcase a permanent collection of over 250 sculptures, as well as drawings, models and photos of Noguchi's national and international works.—**JA**

The Noguchi Museum: 9-01 33rd Road at Vernon Blvd., Long Island City, NY; 718-204-7088; noguchimuseum.org.

COURTESY SMITHERS-OASIS; SHOJI SADAO; ARNOLD EAGLE; ELIZABETH FELICELLA; COURTESY BAILEY NURSERIES

 Everything you've learned in school as "obvious" becomes less and less obvious as you begin to study the universe—R. BUCKMINSTER FULLER

new plants

A NEW BRIDE

Raise your glass and toast the latest in hydrangea introductions—*Hydrangea macrophylla* Endless Summer® Blushing Bride, the soul mate to the wildly popular Endless Summer®. With all the laudable qualities of its predecessor—reblooming, sturdy stems, disease resistance—this exciting newcomer has pure white, semidouble flowers that blush with pink as they mature. Also it reblooms quicker, and flowers are more profuse. Introduced by Bailey Nurseries of St. Paul, Minnesota, and bred by woody-plant guru Dr. Michael Dirr at the University of Georgia in 2001, Blushing Bride is considered by Dirr his most significant introduction so far. Rated at USDA Zone 5 for now, it's also being tested in Zone 4. Though it will be more widely available in 2007, independent garden centers are offering limited quantities this spring and summer. For more information, including a retail locator, visit www.endlesssummerblooms.com. —JA



i love this plant

PAWPAWS IN YOUR POCKET





In my earliest memories is a song with the lines "Pickin' up pawpaws and puttin' 'em in your pocket, way down yonder in the pawpaw patch." But what is a pawpaw, and why would you want to put one in your pocket?

The pawpaw (*Asimina triloba*) is a native tree, found in the eastern half of the United States, 20 to 30 feet tall, with large leaves, maroon flowers and delicious fruit similar in shape to a light green, stubby banana with a flavor like bananas and mangos. It is also an important host for the zebra swallowtail butterfly. I had known about this plant for many years since it is abundant on the shaded slopes of my hillside property, and I successfully moved several to my native-plant garden, despite the belief that it is difficult to transplant. But I had yet to sample the fruit. Some years ago I tasted an unripe pawpaw, which was not a good experience, and so began a quest to find a ripe one.

Early one September day in 2005, my luck changed. On a hike in a nearby park in Nashville, Tennessee, I noticed a gelatinous blob on the ground. Taking a closer look, I was overwhelmed by a fruity smell, then realized the trail cut through a grove of pawpaw trees. I scoured the canopy in hopes of finding more fruit, and there, dangling over my head, was a solitary pawpaw—but 15 feet or more up. I found a stick, took careful aim at the branch holding the fruit and flung it skyward, making a direct hit on the supporting branch and dislodging my prize. As it fell, I grabbed for it and caught it just before it hit the ground. Congratulating myself on an incredible catch, I carefully put the fragrant pawpaw into one of the large cargo pockets of my pants and continued my hike. As I got farther down the trail, I began to chuckle—I realized that I had picked up (or caught) a pawpaw and put it in my pocket.

At home I shared my delicious trophy with my family (except my wife, who has an aversion to weird fruit). My quest had come full circle from those early childhood memories of a song. My only regret is that I denied an opossum, squirrel or raccoon a particularly tasty treat that day.—**PAUL MOORE**



events

Mod Night

In a rare, one-night-only opportunity, Richard Schultz, of Richard Schultz Design, and Scott Mehaffey, design manager for Craig Bergmann Landscape Design, will explore the legacy of modernism as represented in outdoor furniture and landscape design in "An Evening of Outdoor Modernism" held at Elmhurst Art Museum in Elmhurst, Illinois, June 16, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m.

Schultz will detail the impact of his 1966 Collection of outdoor furniture (at left, Contour Lounge and End Table), considered a standard of mid-20th-century design and now part of the permanent collection at New York's Museum of Modern Art. Mehaffey, former landscape architect for The Morton Arboretum, will explore the adaptation of originally California-centric midcentury modernism to the Midwest.

The museum is also worth a visit. Specializing in 20th-century American art, it is designed around the 1950s McCormick House moved to the site in 1994. The house is one of only three buildings in the United States designed by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, considered one of the preeminent architects of the century.—**JA**

■ For more information, call Stephanie Grow at 630-834-0202 Ext. 10 (reservations required). Elmhurst Art Museum, 150 Cottage Hill Ave., Elmhurst, IL 60126; www.elmhurstartmuseum.org.

PAUL MOORE (2); COURTESY RICHARD SCHULTZ DESIGN

art in the garden

WALL FLOWERS

A certain Los Angeles art collector found he didn't have enough wall space in his house for a video installation by renowned American artist Diana Thater, so he commissioned a piece for the garden instead. The looping view of sunflowers was shot in a movie studio on film, with a roving camera sweeping over the flowers, focusing in and out. *Untitled 2003*, which the owner enjoys as a "striking but not gimmicky" piece, plays anytime after dusk on the pristine Mark Rios-designed house walls overlooking the pool. —JOANNA FORTNAM





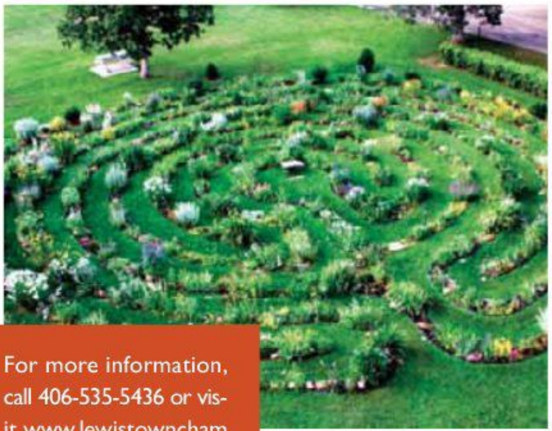
restoration

LOST AND FOUND

Pam Seager, executive director of Rancho Los Alamitos in Long Beach, California, made quite a discovery not long after she took the helm of the historic house and gardens in 1986. Ambling through the 7 ½-acre estate one day, she happened on a dilapidated statue in a pond, where it looked quite out of place. So she picked it up and carefully stored it in a barn. Time went on, but she eventually got to the bottom of it. Dating to 1930, the 27-inch-high bather covered in a beautiful green-blue glaze was identified as only the second-known such figural piece of architectural terra-cotta made by Louise Able of Rookwood pottery—arguably the finest American pottery manufacturer during its years of production from the late 1800s to 1960. Four years later, Seager happened to be reading a site plan of the native garden and noticed a small notation: "The Bather." Suddenly everything made sense; the now immensely valuable Rookwood fountain had been intended to sit beside a stream in that garden. This spring a replica was finally placed in its rightful home on the estate, water flowing out of a frog's mouth at its base. The original has been restored and is kept safe indoors on display. The final *coup de grace*: Seager found an entry in an old ledger belonging to Fred Bixby, whose family owned the property from 1881 to 1968, showing he had purchased the fountain for his wife, Florence, for her birthday, July 2, 1930.—**DONNA DORIAN**

places

LABYRINTH



For more information, call 406-535-5436 or visit www.lewistownchamber.com/labyrinth.htm.

A grand idea often starts small. When Jean Cecil and her sister created a labyrinth in their yard, they never expected to get visitors, especially since they are 3 miles from the nearest town, Lewistown, Montana. But that wasn't the end of it.

With enthusiastic support, the Community Labyrinth Garden in Frank Day Park was born. Later, Friends of the Garden was formed to maintain it. Now in its 10th year, it has become a special gathering place. "We thought how nice it would be to have a labyrinth in the center of our community for people to reach more readily during lunch hours," Cecil says. The seven-circuit labyrinth, the symbol for unity, stretches 90 feet in diameter and provides a quarter-mile walk. Rather than the typical labyrinth, which is often just a mowed pattern in the grass, this one is created with flowers, mostly perennials.

Gardeners and the local Krings Greenhouse and Nursery donated the plants, which are arranged according to height, color and bloom time to provide interest throughout the growing season. Vibrant irises, peonies, poppies and bountiful lupines welcome the summer in June. By the end of July, towering delphiniums, 'Coronation Gold' yarrow, salvias, cheerful daisies and daylilies spill onto the pathway. Then the sedums, cosmos and calendula give a last blast of color in the fall before winter snows blanket the garden, beginning the cycle again. —**AMY GRISAK**

FREDRIK NILSEN; TY MILFORD

Ah, Sunflower, weary of time, who countest the steps of the sun—WILLIAM BLAKE



BROOK COLLINS/CHICAGO PARK DISTRICT

restoration

Lily Pool Revival

ALFRED CALDWELL QUIETLY CREATED LANDscapes rivaling those of his famous mentor Jens Jensen. Now, one of Caldwell's brilliant works officially ranks among the best, on a short list that includes Jensen's Columbus Park in Chicago. The Alfred Caldwell Lily Pool at Chicago's Lincoln Park has been named a National Historic Landmark, making it one of fewer than 50 landscapes to receive the nation's highest honor for historic properties.

Designed in the 1930s as a sanctuary from what Caldwell called Megalopolis, the lily pool was intended to evoke a Midwestern prairie river and included stonework, a pavilion, waterfall, council ring and native plantings (Caldwell bought the wildflowers by cashing his life insurance policy). Sadly, in subsequent years it fell into ruin. Though a 1993 restoration stalled, at the turn of the century the garden underwent an exhaustive $2.5 million effort led by Chicago Park District and Lincoln Park Conservancy.

Caldwell, who died in 1998 at age 95, was a prolific landscape and structural architect, teacher, lecturer, artist, philosopher and poet. He never achieved during his long life the acclaim many say he deserved, although scholarship recognized him as the last great designer of the 20th century's Prairie School. "The lily pool is so incredibly beautiful," says Julia Sniderman Bachrach, Chicago Park District historian. "It is one of the few sites where you can see Caldwell's ideas fully implemented."

Charles Birnbaum, founder of The Cultural Landscape Foundation, says part of the reason why so few of the nearly 2,900 national historic landmarks are landscapes is that the 1966 National Historic Preservation Act did not focus on outdoor spaces. Not until 1989 did the National Register of Historic Places publish guidelines for these types of sites. "For many of these landscapes, it's publish or perish," Birnbaum says. Thankfully a 1997 Caldwell book edited by Dennis Domer (*Alfred Caldwell: The Life and Times of a Prairie School Landscape Architect*, The Johns Hopkins University Press) brought the designer's genius and his Lily Pool to public attention.—**LAURIE GRANO**

The **Lily Pool** is open daily; free guided tours are held Fridays and weekends, late April through September. For more information, call 312-742-7529 or visit www.chicagoparkdistrict.com.

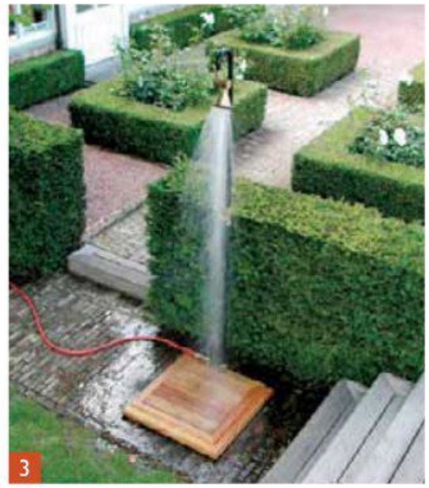
The pools are overflowing with water, and the land is luxuriantly green—SRI GURU GRANTH SAHIB



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outdoor living

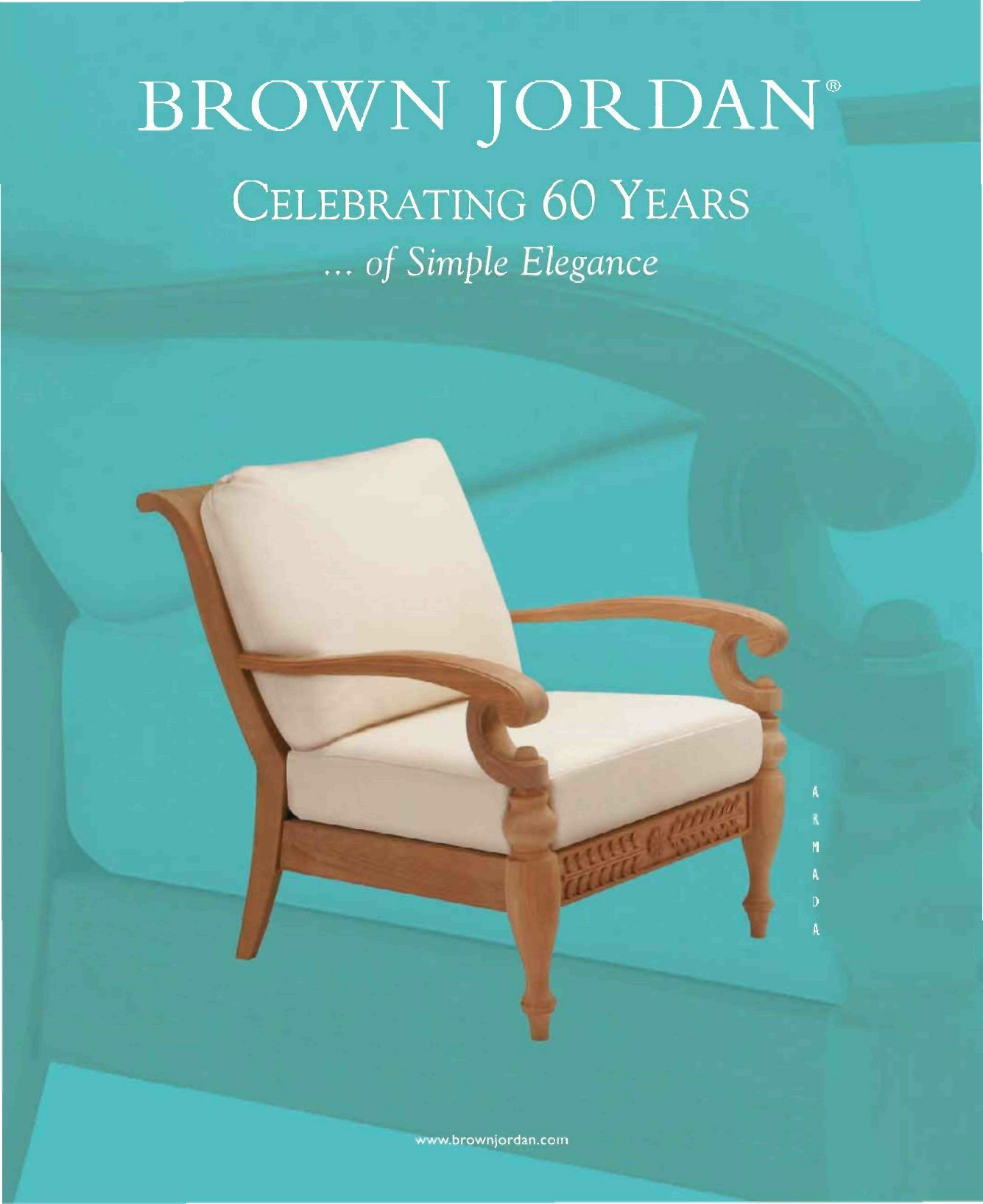
Instant Alfresco Showers

TODAY SHOWERING OUTDOORS—A PARADIGM-SHIFTING EXPERIENCE, BY THE WAY, IF YOU have yet to try it—is as simple as plunking down $89.97 at Wal-Mart for a Delahey Wooden Outdoor Shower, pulling it out of the box, attaching a garden hose and lathering up.

However, for more discriminating tastes, there are dozens of sophisticated models on the market, from moderately priced freestanding hardwood styles to extravagant designs worthy of a Paris Hilton pool party. Most are ready to go, straight out of the proverbial box. Just add the three P's of outdoor showers—privacy, people and plumbing—and transform a largely indoor activity to an alfresco one.—**JASON UPRIGHT**

[1] Jane Hamley Wells' new Waterfall Shower incorporates the warmth and elegance of teak hardwood with the industrial chic of cold, hard stainless steel for a design reminiscent of a Donald Trump-inspired skyscraper. $3,100; www.janehamleywells.com. [2] The Paname outdoor shower by D'un Jardin a L'autre in charcoal zinc not only whispers elegant minimalism through a sleek and modern design, but zinc construction, stainless-steel fittings and a matte-black finish mean zero maintenance. $863; www.douches-de-jardins.com. [3] The simplistically beautiful-yet-crafty Show'R by Janus et Cie allows outdoor bathing during summer and, with a simple adjustment, transforms into a boot shower in winter. $1,135; www.janusetcie.com.

It's raining men, hallelujah—PAUL JABARA AND PAUL SCHAFFER


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shopping

FINE FABRICS

SeaCloth is a store inspired by fabrics. In October 2003, Susan Harris, a painter interested in textile design, and Deirdre Halper, a marketing executive, launched their boldly colored seasonal fabric line based on Harris' watercolors. The 100-plus fabrics offered, 21 specifically for the outdoors, have a painterly quality and brush strokes in Harris' hand—something the partners go to great lengths to achieve. "From the start we saw our fabrics as being perfect for outdoor living. There was definitely a desire between us to move beyond the basics that have been available for years," says Halper.

In April 2004, they opened their outdoor entertaining store on the tony main drag of Greenwich, Connecticut, a city keenly focused on summer outdoor entertaining. SeaCloth is now featured in five high-end showrooms across the country, including John Rosselli & Associates in New York and Washington, D.C., and Thomas Lavin in Los Angeles.

A different fabric collection moves to the fore at SeaCloth each season in totes, pillows and cushions, oven mitts and place settings. The line is also found in laminated trays, ice buckets and bowls.

"These days, people approach their outside décor with fashion in mind. That's our approach, too," notes Halper.

Their fifth SeaCloth fabric line from 2005 is Sconset, in shades based on driftwood and beach pebbles, and the sixth and newest line is Splash On in summery shades of blue, green, coral and cocoa. —**LINDA OLLE**

SeaCloth: 107 Greenwich Ave., Greenwich, Conn.; 203-422-6150; www.seacloth.com.



products

Mini Terrarium

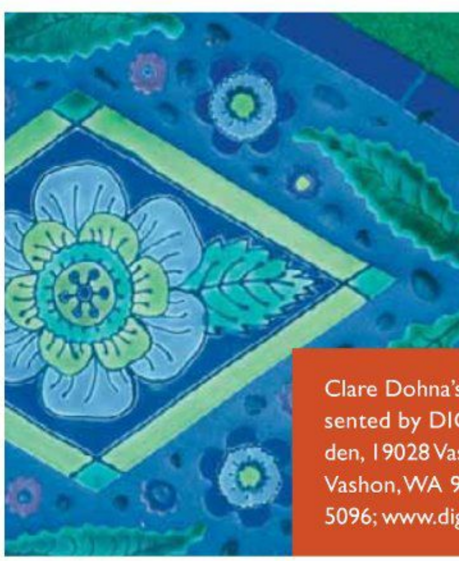
Imagine a plant that stays small and cute, which you never have to water, feed or repot. An offshoot of the tissue culture industry, Biosphere Bubbles from Worldwide Elements contain tiny plants in a nutrient-rich gel in sealed glass globes, creating tiny terrariums. A variety of plants are available, like peace lily, philodendron and calathea, and the gel is available in several colors. The bubble comes with a stand or it can be suspended. Call 305-248-3553 for purchase information. —JA

art

Sleek Slither

Clare Dohna crafts weather-hardy garden mosaic bits into everything from birdhouses, turtles and "brainballs" to…a giant rattlesnake slithering the width of her garden. To look down from the deck on this sinuous 60-foot-long snake path is a head-turning play on scale. A stroll along its diamond patterned back is a reflexology treatment for the feet as well as a pleasant submersion into complex color patterning. Beware the reptile's head, for its hooded eyes are disquietingly snakelike, even though Dohna used a child's basketball for a mold. The rattler serves as a centerpiece for Dohna's Vashon Island garden, with raised stone beds shaped around its undulations and blue-flowering ceanothus flanking its head and tail.

Dohna became fascinated with mosaics when a big pottery piece she'd spent months working on in college blew up in the kiln. She glued the pieces back together and liked the look. Each creation is unique because she makes every mosaic bit herself, rolling out slabs of clay, cutting shapes, firing, applying color glazes and firing again to ensure they are frost-proof. Dohna adds bits of mirror and smooth stones, but her work is best-known for its masterful color patterning in shades of blue, green and yellow, from butter to intense gold.—**VALERIE EASTON**





Clare Dohna's work is represented by DIG Floral & Garden, 19028 Vashon Hwy. S.W., Vashon, WA 98070; 206-463-5096; www.dignursery.com.

JACQUELINE KOCH (2); ZACH STOVALL (2); GREENWORKS (1)

Look before you leap, for snakes among sweet flowers creep—UNKNOWN



Clockwise from top left: Nova (in harvest yellow), Atlas bowl (avocado), grower pot, Decor vase and urn styles (natural).

environment

EARTH-FRIENDLY POTS

One of the biggest environmental problems in the nursery and landscaping industries, not to mention a huge hassle for consumers, is what to do with used plastic pots. Most community recycling centers don't accept them, and only rarely can gardeners find an environmentally minded, if-it-can-be-used-don't-throw-it-away nursery that will take the pots for reuse.

The answer might not just be to recycle plastic containers but to make pots out of materials that are organic and break down naturally. A number of companies worldwide—including BioPot in Canada, Earth Buddy in the U.K. and EnviroArc pots in Australia—are already testing and producing biodegradable pots made from grasses, grains and vegetable oils, with shelf lives ranging from months to years. Though the industry is still in its infancy in the United States, it is definitely growing and should be on the radar screen for every grower, landscaper and gardener.

One line of biodegradable pots already on the market is EcoForms™ from Sweetwater Nursery of Santa Rosa, California, available at garden centers on the West Coast but expanding soon to other parts of the country. The line includes both functional containers for growers and decorative pots for consumers, with a shelf life of five years. Manufactured in Asia primarily out of rice hulls and natural binding agents, the pots were discovered behind a garden center counter in Holland by Sweetwater owners Elise Loveday-Brown and David Brown. Elise and David not only market the pots to growers and retail outlets (Whole Foods Market is a customer), but also use the pots in their nursery with very positive results. The pots range in size from 3 inches to 2 liters and come in a variety of styles (coming soon is an orchid pot) and five colors. Besides the obvious benefits to the environment, Elise and David have found that biodegradable pots have better insulating qualities, making for strong root systems, and even have a fertilizing effect—when old pots are ground up and spread on the lawn, the grass turns green. —JA

environment

WETLAND REDUX

In the heart of downtown Portland's tony Pearl District, an oak savanna emerges, re-creating the "wilds" of Oregon's Willamette Valley in an urban garden park. Reeds, sedges and 4-foot grasses swish in the breeze. Purple camas (*Camassia leichtlinii*), pink-flowered bearberry (*Arctostaphyllos uva-ursi*) and creeping mahonia (*Mahonia repens*) color the terrain. Like a natural spring, water burbles up to the surface and flows into streams that meander over stones, through a marsh and into a pond. Tanner Springs Park is a place for contemplation amid the hubbub of the city, creatively engineered as a sustainable, functioning wetland.

Evocative of the native Pacific Northwest, the 0.9-acre garden was designed by Dreiseitl/Waterscapes of Uberlingen, Germany, collaborating with local landscape architects GreenWorks, P.C. Herbert Dreiseitl describes the process as "peeling back the skin of the city" to look beneath this site's recent industrial past of warehouses and train yards to find the forgotten landscape.

Rainwater is channeled through the vegetation and pond via an innovative biotope system, where the water is filtered, cleansed and recirculated to emulate natural wetlands. Spanning the pond, a metal zigzagged walkway entices visitors to stroll atop the water. A sculptural wall of undulating railroad rails salvaged from the area, the oldest dating to 1898, provides a dramatic backdrop. Punctuating the metal are panels of fused colored glass imbued with drawings of creatures that would have lived in the wetland centuries ago.

Throughout the park, the sounds and scenes of the city disappear in a garden legacy of the land's wild natural past.—**DONNA MATRAZZO**



Do not wait for extraordinary circumstances to do good action; try to use ordinary situations—JOHN PAUL RICHTER

Beguiling Begonias

Begonias offer a tapestry of foliage, making lush, colorful warm-season additions to outdoor gardens and of course easy houseplants

PROBABLY EVERY GARDENER HAS GROWN A BEGONIA OF SOME KIND, ALTHOUGH FOR MANY THEIR FAMILIARITY stops with the compact, abundantly flowering wax begonias (*Begonia semperflorens*) of bedding and window-box fame. However, this tropical and subtropical genus of more than 2,500 species and varieties offers a wide range of plant habits (from stiffly upright to gently cascading, as well as neatly mounded), leaf types (often wedge-shaped but running the gamut from linear to almost circular), leaf colors and patterns (in 1960s-psychedelic combinations of green, red, pink, brown, silver and bronze dots, splashes and lines) and flower colors (mostly candy-store shades of pink, red and white). Best of all, begonias put on a show indoors as long-lived houseplants year round and outdoors as annual summer foliage plants in containers or tucked into the garden. The begonias pictured here are all hybrids except one species and represent a cross section of the numerous types, including rhizomatous, canelike and rex. —RAY ROGERS



BEGONIA SOLI-MUTATA
A Brazilian species of relatively recent discovery. Grows densely (like most rhizomatous kinds) and prefers higher humidity than most. Foliage darkens with more light. White flowers appear sporadically.

Appeal: Tropical exuberance and a seemingly endless diversity make begonias irresistible for virtually any shady setting. Container-grown specimens offer easy portability for moving out of doors in warm weather.

Zones: Begonias will survive outdoors in Zone 10. Many will go partially dormant during cold spells, even in a house. Most of us can enjoy success with begonias indoors.

Exposure: Most begonias thrive in plenty of bright light but with little or no direct sun, except during the grayer months of winter, when every minute of sunshine is appreciated.

Soil: Pot-grown begonias thrive in a light, open, slightly acidic, well-drained mix made mostly of peat, coir (composted coconut fiber) or ground bark. Many commercial mixes work fine, especially if perlite or similar material is added to keep the medium loose. Those in the open ground do well in well-drained, highly organic soil.

Care: Indoors, grow in clay pots or moss-lined hanging baskets and provide good drainage. More begonias probably die from overwatering than any other cause; let the surface of the potting mix dry out a little between waterings. Regularly apply a balanced water-soluble fertilizer during active growth. Most prefer temperatures between 60 and 75 degrees with humidity in the middle range (40 to 60 percent); many tolerate the low 50s if the potting mix is on the dry side and the humidity is favorable. Outdoors, grow out of direct sun, such as under a high-canopied tree, and don't forget to fertilize.

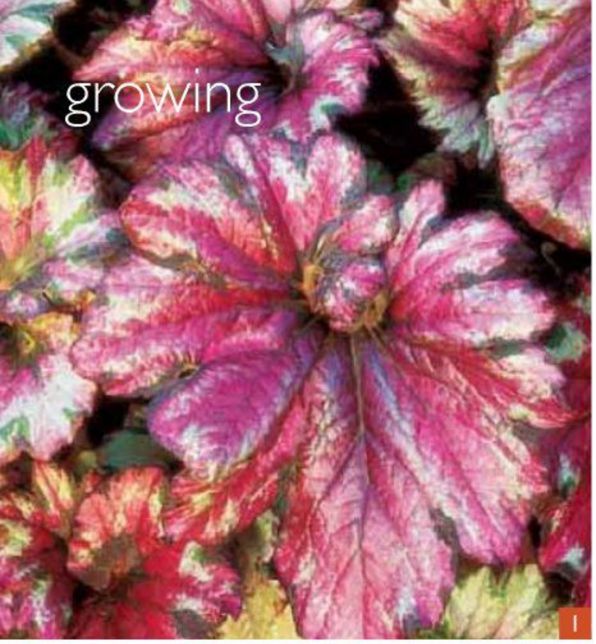
Let your life lightly dance on the edges of Time like dew on the tip of a leaf—RABINDRANATH TAGORE

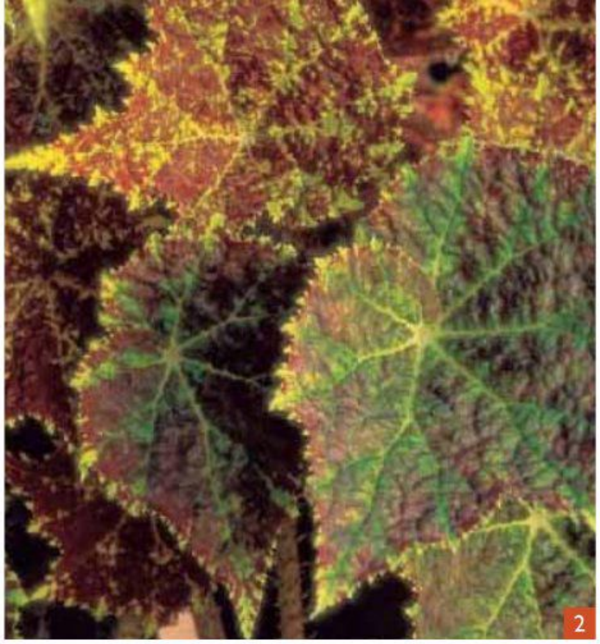


RICHARD HARTLAGE (2)

'MAURICE AMEY'
Winglike, widely spaced leaves on tall, upright stems classify this as a canelike begonia. Deep pink flowers provide a vivid contrast to the metallic-toned foliage. Growth sprouts readily from the base, unlike many cane sorts.

The one had leaves of dark green that beneath were as shining silver—J.R.R. TOLKIEN


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[1] **'RASPBERRY SWIRL'** Like most rex begonias, 'Raspberry Swirl' prefers more warmth, humidity and soil moisture than many others in the genus. Direct sunlight can scorch it, and it needs protection from sudden temperature changes.

[2] **'MARMADUKE'** Grow this big boy's abundant, rather large leaves to perfection in a hanging basket, which encourages this rhizomatous kind to assume a pleasing circular outline. As with many begonias, its coloration changes in response to seasonal changes in light intensity.

[3] **'MIRAGE'** Provided bright-enough light (which this and its rhizomatous kin require to stay dense), some of the leaves on this compact mound will assume a pink tinge. At about 18 inches wide by about a foot tall, 'Mirage' sits in the middle of the size range for its class.

[4] **'LOOKING GLASS'** A rapid grower, this canelike beauty has a less upright posture than many; a few judiciously but unobtrusively placed stakes and ties will improve its appearance. Few other plants offer this much silvery seduction.

[5] **'NEBULA ZETA'** Large, starry leaves start out almost entirely red, then progress through many shades of yellow and green. Like most rhizomatous sorts, its dense growth benefits from lower humidity levels than many other begonias prefer.

[6] **'KIT KAT'** Barely a foot tall and wide, here's a neat little rhizomatous begonia for smaller spaces. The congested mound of 3-inch leaves almost disappears under a gazillion little white flowers in late winter.

■ *For more information, visit the American Begonia Society's website (www.begonias.org) or subscribe to its bimonthly journal,* The Begonian. *One good source of plants is Cloudy Valley Nursery (www.begonias.com). Thanks to Janet Welsh and Charles Jaros of the ABS and Ken Selody of Atlock Farm, where these photos were taken.*

RICHARD HARTLAGE (6)

To understand is to perceive patterns—ISAIAH BERLIN


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'ART HODES' Like other thick-stemmed begonias, this one defies most attempts to grow it symmetrically, assuming an irregular, layered look that provides a dramatic backdrop to the equally energetic flower clusters.

RICHARD HARLAGE

designing with begonias

- **Take advantage of their flashy, metallic coloration, strong leaf shapes and imposing plant stature. Indoors or out, give begonias pride of place singly or among less-flashy foliage or flowering plants, or combine them with other extroverts to create a potent design statement.**
- **Feature a particularly well-grown specimen on a column or plant stand or in a striking container, such as a wrought-iron urn or an aluminum box.**
- **Mass begonias with each other or with other colorful and abundantly leafy plants, such as caladiums, coleus, plectranthus and even hostas.**
- **Complement metallic-leaved selections with pink-, violet- and lavender-flowering impatiens or scaevola.**
- **Contrast their often-massive form and coarse texture with lighter, finer plants, including spider plants and ferns, especially in hanging baskets.**

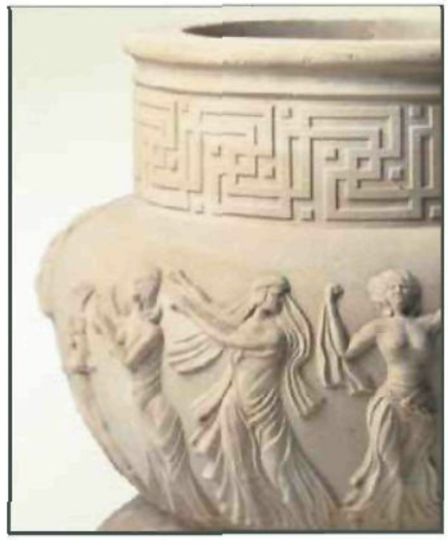
 I am the terror that flaps in the night, I am the slug that slimes your begonias—DARKWING DUCK



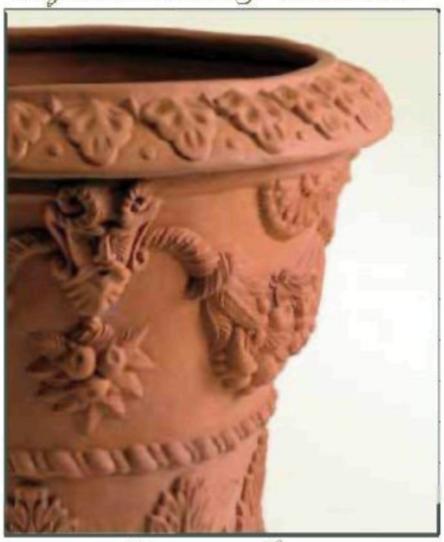
English Ashmore & Vase Plinth



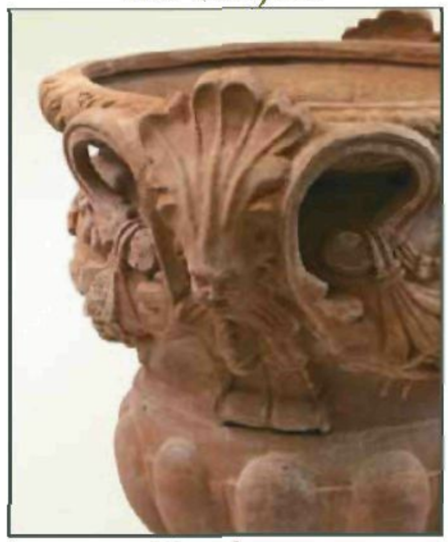
French Anduze



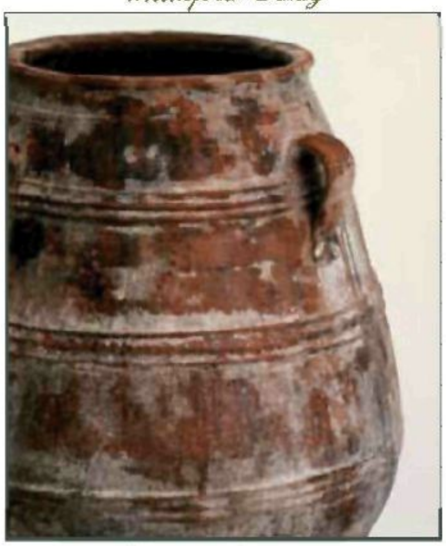
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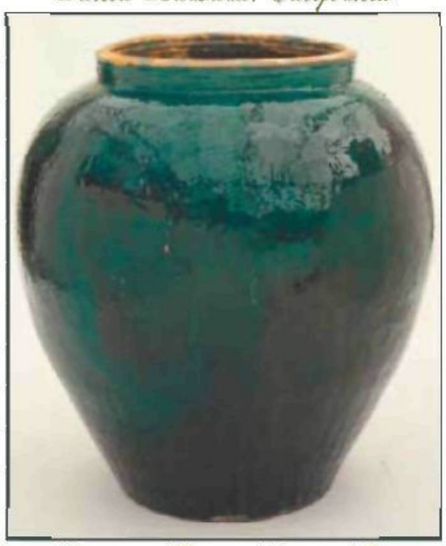
Whichford Swag



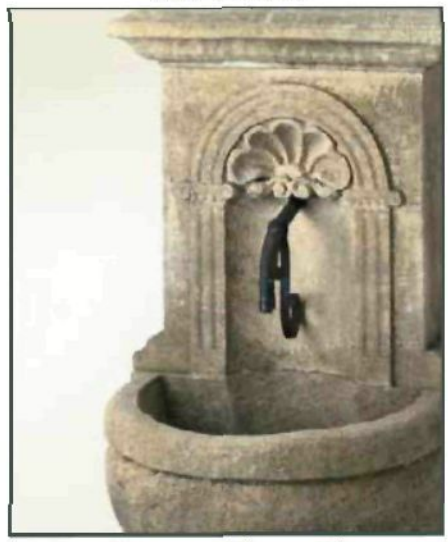
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decor

CREATIVE IDEAS IN EXTERIOR DECORATING





John Danzer's Taconic loungers selected by Pamela Burton (below) are a perfect complement to the Mexican feather grass planted among the dunes in front of this Malibu beach house.

Endless Summer

A Malibu beach house designed with an architect's eye for space and a gardener's passion for plants

STEVE GUNTHER (2); JACQUI FEATHER (1)



FACING THE OCEAN AT THE EDGE OF THE CONTINENT, it only makes sense that the front of a beach house in Malibu, California, looks out to the horizon—and not the street. Santa Monica-based landscape architect Pamela Burton took this to heart when she recently collaborated with a Malibu beachfront homeowner. Burton approached the dunes between the front of the house and the ocean with a dramatic, minimal design that emphasizes the glories of the natural environment. To offset the composition, a pair of low-slung loungers echoes the color and sway of the grasses planted beyond. It could not be more beautiful.

In contrast to the tranquility along the beachfront, the backyard—which is entered from the street—includes a variety of areas for outdoor entertaining. To accommodate a bluestone patio and fireplace, a lawn and a terrace off the guesthouse, Pamela divided the space into a number of subplots. The whole is embraced by a garden of 'Iceberg' roses, lavender, native iris, ficus and sycamores moved to the site. Welcome to a house designed for the senses.







The backyard includes three outdoor rooms: a bluestone patio and fireplace (above), a quiet reading area (right, top) and a belvedere off the guesthouse (right, below).

FUNCTION: To offer the homeowner, her family and friends a place to get away and enjoy life at the beach.

FORM: "The form is determined by the program, and the program is how people use the space," explains Burton. She created a design "like a novel with a main story and a number of subplots." In the backyard those subplots include a belvedere outlook off the guesthouse, a lawn, a circulation path, and a bluestone-paved dining terrace equipped with a fireplace and barbecue.

STYLE: California beach house.

FURNITURE: The art-savvy homeowner selected furnishings from a menu compiled by the New York-based exterior designer John Danzer. Among them were his award-winning Taconic lounger, an enameled stone tabletop from Sue Fisher King in San Francisco, and Danzer's fabricated aluminum industrial garden chairs.

PLANTS: For the dunes, Burton chose Mexican feather grass (*Nassella tenuissima*) for its texture and color and because it can stand up to salt spray. The backyard was framed by overgrown ficus trees that were lowered in a series of prunings.

BONUS: The joy the homeowner receives from her home, which bends to her every need. —**DONNA DORIAN**

■ *For more information, call 310-828-6373 or see www.pamelaburtonco.com. For John Danzer, call Munder-Skiles at 212-717-0150 or see www.munder-skiles.com. For Sue Fisher King, see www.suefisherking.com.*

STEVE GUNTHER (3)

I like a view but I like to sit with my back turned to it—GERTRUDE STEIN

BY DONNA DORIAN



2



1

Benchmarks

The essence of simplicity, the garden bench explores new boundaries after a millennium of reinvention



3

NO DOUBT THE FIRST BENCH WAS NOT A MAN-made object but one discovered eons ago when someone sat down on a fallen tree trunk to give their feet a rest. We've come a long way, but the archetypal form continues to intrigue designers to reinvent the language of the bench.

Included among the following striking and contemporary examples are benches that explore the modularity of the form: Some double as sun loungers; others make room for storage units and containers. Crafted in materials from teak to plastic, fiberglass, concrete and stainless steel, and made by designers across the globe, they present a sampling of how after centuries of innovation the form continues to inspire designers to explore its boundaries, find new applications and outdo themselves.

[1] **WAVE BENCH** Ushered into the 21st century in cast fiberglass, this bench, with its clean, smooth and simple design, found its lineage in the modernist California gardens of Thomas Church of the 1940s and early 1950s. It couldn't be cooler. From Float: $3,800. Call 215-557-0583 or see www.floatland.com.

[2] **PANKOTTO BENCH** More serious fun in polypropylene, this blocky, low-to-the-ground, easy-to-move bench by Italian designer Bruno Rainaldi comes in orange, gray and dark and navy blue. Enjoy. From Design Within Reach: $368. Call 800-944-2233 or see www.dwr.com.

[3] **ZINC POT BENCH** Incorporating its own pot, this bench is so original it's hard to believe no one thought of it before. Made from zinc with stainless-steel construction, it assumes a beautiful white patina when left outdoors year round. From Domani (www.domani.be). Available from Winston Flowers: $2,500. Call 800-457-4901.

Love is what makes two people sit in the middle of a bench when there is plenty of room at both ends—UNKNOWN



4



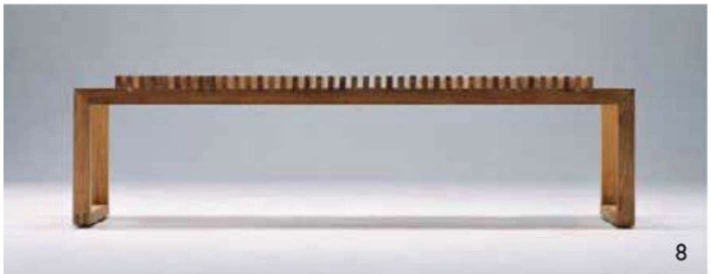
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[4] **PENINSULA BENCH** Designer Terry Hunziker addresses the bench within the framework of contemporary architecture. Available in a range of teak and textured powder-coated aluminum finishes, his design exudes the warm minimalism that Hunziker—and Sutherland—are known for. From Sutherland: to the trade. Call 800-717-8325 or see www.sutherlandteak.com.

[5] **THE VITEO BENCH** Here modularity is the key: The removable backrest system allows this bench to do triple duty as sun lounger, table seating or big "island." Made in a range of high-grade woods and heights by the brave, new European outdoor furniture company Viteo (www.viteo.com). Available from Jarlathdan (631-267-6455; www.jarlathdan.com), Canova (212-352-3582; www.canova.com) and USONA (215-496-0440; www.usonahome.com).

[6] **TAJI STORAGE BENCH** Combining the sleek good looks of grade-A teak and brushed stainless steel, this multitasking bench includes a storage box under its seat ideal for holding its own cushions or small garden tools. From Jane Hamley Wells: $1,400 to $1,600, depending on size. Call 773-227-4988 or see www.janehamleywells.com.

[7] **BIG JOE'S BROTHER BURT** Long, dark and handsome, this quietly elegant bench with the whimsical name demonstrates furniture designer Douglas Thayer's mastery at coupling concrete and mahogany. From Clodagh: Call 212-780-5300 x 203 or see www.clodagh.com.

[8] **CUTTER BENCH** Created by the Dane Niels Hvass in teak, this simple form embodies distinct references to classic Scandinavian design traditions and the principles of Cubism. Fabulous to look at and sit on. From Skagerak: $580 to $773, depending on size. Call 866-490-2448 or see www.skagerak-USA.com.

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Luxury Outdoor Living 2006

Go to www.gardendesign.com for a full recap of Luxury Outdoor Living 2006. There you will find information on the designers who created "The Outdoor Mansion", a series of five outdoor room vignettes decked with the finest in outdoor furnishings and accessories.

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SAVING AMERICA'S GARDEN HERITAGE

With the biennial Landslide program, The Cultural Landscape Foundation and *Garden Design* raise the red flag on 18 threatened landmark gardens. Located all around the country, they include masterworks designed by some of America's most significant landscape architects. They are worth visiting, studying and preserving for future generations. All are at risk and need our attention.

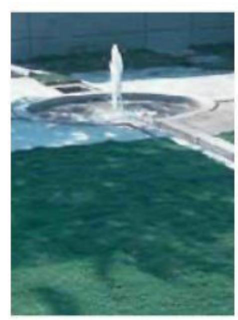


Four views of Nations Bank Plaza Park, Tampa, Florida: one of the finest works of Dan Kiley, a giant of 20th-century landscape architecture.





Landslide 2006 recognizes the design significance of Nations Bank Plaza and supports Friends of Kiley Park in its efforts to save this neglected gem. Contact info@KileyGardens.org.



PETER L. SHAUDT (2); R. ALEXANDER & ASSOCIATES (2)

The Cultural Landscape Foundation, of Washington, D.C., is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to increasing awareness of America's cultural landscapes and helping save them. For more information on its mission as well as the gardens of Landslide 2006, see www.tclf.org.





LOUISIANA LANDSCAPES

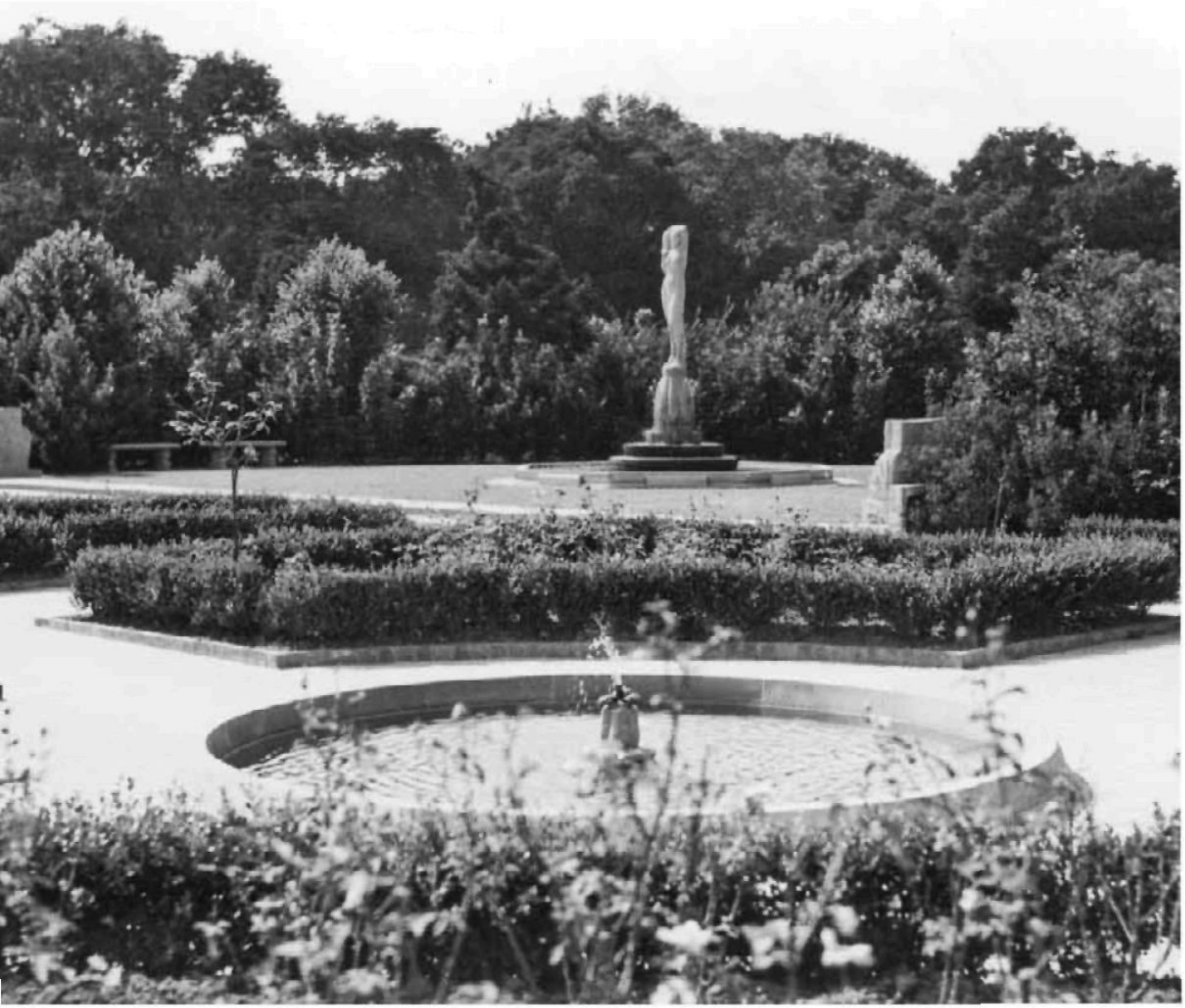
In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, few victims have received less national attention than Louisiana's historic designed landscapes. The most notable include two early-19th-century River Road sites—Oak Alley and Laura plantations—which reflect the vital Creole heritage of the New Orleans area. Two early-20th-century properties are also at risk: Longue Vue House & Gardens is regarded as one of the finest villas of the Country Place era, an acclaimed tour de force that juxtaposes a landscape designed by Ellen Biddle Shipman with the architectural masterwork of William and Geoffrey Platt. The New Orleans Botanical Garden is one of the few extant examples of public garden design from the WPA and art deco periods.

Landslide 2006 cites the need for funding at Longue Vue and The New Orleans Botanical Garden to overcome hurricane damage, while Oak Alley and Laura plantations are suffering from a dramatic post-Katrina fall-off in visitors and income.

To visit and to help: Longue Vue House & Gardens, 7 Bamboo Road, New Orleans, LA 70124; 504-488-5488; www.longuevue.com. The New Orleans Botanical Garden, One Palm Drive, New Orleans, LA 70124; 504-482-4888; www.neworleanscitypark.com. Oak Alley Plantation, 3645 Highway 18, Vacherie, LA 70090; 225-265-2151; www.oakalleyplantation.com. Laura Plantation, 2247 Highway 18, Vacherie, LA 70090; 888-799-7690; www.lauraplantation.com.

Above: The entrance allée at Longue Vue, where William and Geoffrey Platt's Classical Revival-style house forms a cohesive plan with the gardens by Ellen Biddle Shipman. Below: A garden at Laura Plantation, pre-Katrina.









Above: An archive photo of The New Orleans Botanical Garden, with central sculpture by Enrique Alferez.
Far left: A boxwood parterre at Longue Vue damaged by Katrina.
Near left: Oak Alley Plantation in spring, magnolias in the foreground, before the hurricane hit.



MANITOGA

RUSSEL WRIGHT (1904-1976) WAS ONE OF AMERICA'S PREMIER designers from the 1930s through the 1950s and a pioneering force in the emerging field of industrial design. In 1942 he and his wife, Mary, purchased nearly 80 acres on the east side of the Hudson River near Garrison, New York, and named it Manitoga, which in Algonquin means Place of the Great Spirit. Wright approached this abandoned landscape as a sculptor, slowly revealing its character and bringing out its most subtle and beautiful features. In addition to the views from the house, the landscape is experienced primarily by walking the paths that he designed through the woods. Wright considered it to be his most important creative effort. The house and garden, listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1996, is presently run by Manitoga/The Russel Wright Design Center. It remains the only 20th-century modern home site open to the public in New York.

Landslide 2006 points out major threats to the landscape, including wooly adelgids infesting and killing the eastern hemlocks, deer browsing on the few seedlings the stressed hemlocks produce, and soil erosion and vegetation management issues.

To visit and to help: Manitoga / The Russel Wright Design Center, 584 Route 9D, P.O. Box 249, Garrison, NY 10524; 845-424-3812; www.russelwrightcenter.org.

Manitoga's landscape was conceived in relation to the steep topography of the site and its most conspicuous feature, the abandoned stone quarry, where Wright positioned his house and studio, collectively known as Dragon Rock.





Above: In 1998, restoration began on many of the 35 original statues at Gibraltar, bought by the Sharps on their regular trips to Italy, England, China and France. Below: An archive photo of Gibraltar, circa 1920.

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

GIBRALTAR GARDENS

AMONG THE FIRST WOMEN FORMALLY TRAINED IN LANDSCAPE ARchitecture and one of the finest landscape architects of her time, Marian Coffin designed Gibraltar's Country Place Era gardens for the H. Rodney Sharp family in 1916. Punctuated with 35 statues, the property is Italianate in design but English in planting style, as was typical of the period. Preservation Delaware saved the property and its gardens from demolition in 1990 and now runs the property as a free public garden. In order to secure an "adaptive reuse" for the mansion, however, the entire property is now up for sale, with the intention that Preservation Delaware will lease back the garden from the new owner. In the interim, Preservation Delaware wants to get the word out that this valuable garden is here and in need of assistance.

Landslide 2006 notes that Preservation Delaware must quickly find a buyer for the property or find some other means to secure the future of Gibraltar.

To visit and to help: The Marian Coffin Garden at Gibraltar, 1405 Greenhill Ave., Wilmington, DE 19806; 302-651-9617; www.preservationde.org/gibraltar/garden/history.htm. Preservation Delaware, Inc., 1405 Greenhill Ave., Wilmington, DE 19806; 302-651-9617.



Landslide 2006

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

DUNN GARDENS

IN 1916 ARTHUR DUNN, A KEEN AND KNOWLEDGEABLE GARDENER, began implementing a master plan for half of a shared 20-acre property that offered sweeping views of Puget Sound and the Olympic Mountains. The plan was developed by James Dawson, of the Olmsted Brothers' West Coast office, and today Dunn Gardens is among the few extant Olmsted-designed Country Place estates open to the public in Washington state. Its listing on the National Register of Historic Places in 1994 was based on the relatively intact quality of the Olmsted plan and additions to the property after Dunn's death. These include a Japanese garden with a water feature designed by Seattle landscape designer Fujitaro Kubota and the expansion of the garden by Arthur's son, Edward B. Dunn, a nationally recognized plantsman, whose woodland garden contains his collection of native plants and the native and hybridized rhododendrons for which he was known. Landslide 2006 lists threats from subdivision, the decline of the neighborhood forest and nature itself—the Douglas firs and eastern hardwoods are aging.

To visit and to help: E.B. Dunn Historic Garden Trust, Box 77126, Seattle, WA 98177; info@dunngardens.org; www.dunngardens.org.

Below: Arthur Dunn worked closely with James Dawson, of the Olmsted Brothers' West Coast office, to implement Dawson's masterplan that added many deciduous trees for texture and color.





DUMBARTON OAKS PARK

BETWEEN 1921 AND 1940, BEATRIX FARRAND CREATED A NOW-legendary landscape masterpiece for Robert and Mildred Bliss, completing a series of formal gardens whose ultimate destination was a naturalistic "wild" landscape in the valley below. Today, the formal gardens belong to Harvard University and are regarded as the jewel of Georgetown. The National Park Service owns and manages the less-well-known "wild" garden, which suffers from inadequate funding.

Landslide 2006 focuses on the dangers facing the naturalistic valley landscape. The most serious threats include ever-increasing storm-water flows caused by upstream urban and suburban development, deteriorating architectural features, overgrown and invasive vegetation, and lack of continuing funding for routine maintenance and interpretation.

To visit and to help: Dumbarton Oaks Park, entrance at 31st and R Streets, N.W., Washington, DC 20007; 202-339-6401; www.doaks.org. To donate or to volunteer, e-mail ROCR_supertintendent@nps.gov.

As these archive photos show, the valley garden, with its abundance of spring-flowering bulbs, provided a backdrop to the Dumbarton Oaks estate, fostering the illusion of a pastoral retreat within the city. Far right: The Forsythia Gate separated the formal gardens from the wild landscape.





Landslide 2006: More Culturally Significant Gardens at Risk

baldwin hills village

■ Los Angeles, California. Now known as Village Green, this residential "superblock" development typifies Clarence Stein's "Radburn Idea." Its owners' association now seeks to protect the site's historic character and manage its aging trees. Call 323-294-5212 or visit http://villagegreenla.net.

becker estate

■ Highland Park, Illinois. Legendary landscape architect Jens Jensen designed a prairie-style garden in the early 1920s on a nearly 20-acre estate on a bluff overlooking Lake Michigan. The property is now in receivership with the possibility of subdivision. Visit www.landmarks.org/chicago_watch_2004_1.htm.

cayey, puerto rico

■ Built between 1917 and 1939, many of the country homesteads in Cayey's *barrio* of Jajome exemplify a local Puerto Rican landscape design tradition thought to be extinct. Lack of documentation, as well as the potential for mining, put at risk a rare landscape heritage. Contact the Architecture Department of the Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico, 787-765-1465.

gerdemann garden

■ Yachats, Oregon. In the 1970s, Dr. Jim and Janice Gerdemann began gardening on a mountain slope facing the Pacific Ocean. Now they are in their 80s and must secure the future of their magnificent woodland garden. Call 541-547-3544 or visit gerdych@casco.net.

greatwood garden

■ Plainfield, Vermont. Designed by Arthur Shurcliff, as part of William S. Martin's Greatwood Farms, these gardens, now owned by Goddard College, stand among the finest works of historic landscape architecture in Vermont. Funding is the major obstacle for preservation of this National Register property. Call 866-614-2586.

latham park

■ Sioux City, Iowa. This 1916 prairie farmhouse and park comprise half a city block. Endangered by rising costs and dwindling trust assets, the site may be subdivided. Visit www.lathampark.com.

margaret thomas garden

■ Herndon, Virginia. Margaret Thomas has been growing irises since 1963. Her garden has become a mainstay of the community and the last open space left on the busy Reston-Fairfax corridor. Funding and future use as a community center are key to saving it. Call 703-324-1409.

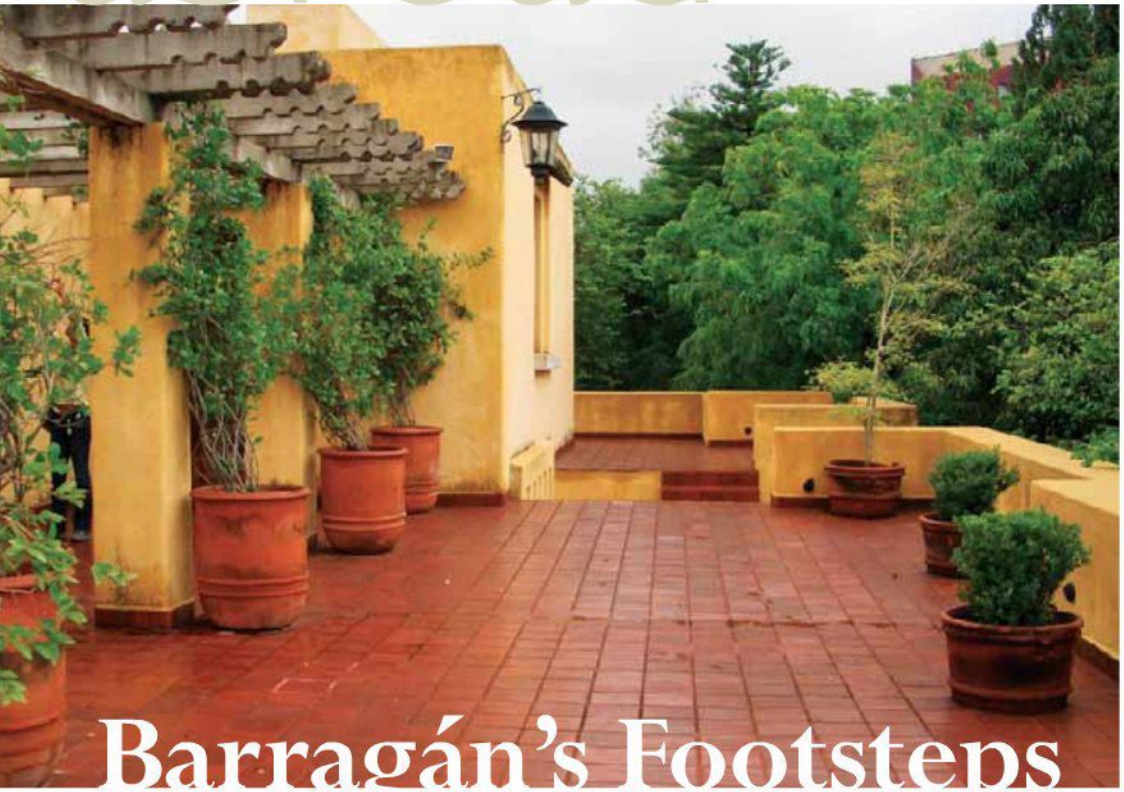
nehrling's palm cottage gardens

■ Gotha, Florida. Dr. Henry Nehrling, a horticulturist and the "patron saint of Florida gardens," achieved his dream here of growing tropicals and subtropicals year-round. The core of this historic property, one of Florida's first experimental botanical garden, can be secured through purchase. Call 407-876-1894 or visit www.nehrlinggardens.org.

peachtree heights west

■ Begun in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1910 and listed on the National Register since 1980, this is the only known suburb designed by the illustrious architecture firm of Carrere & Hastings. Development is affecting the fabric of the community. Look for Peachtree Heights West at www.tclf.org under Landslide 2006.

■ For information on all endangered gardens, see www.tclf.org.





Barragán's Footsteps

Take a walk through the gardens of the Mexican master designer just as he did

"IT IS NECESSARY TO MAKE HOUSES AND GARdens and garden houses. ...There must be an intimacy and the feeling of living in gardens; to achieve this, one must build proportioned and well-arranged gardens."—Luis Barragán

As an architecture student at the University of Florida, it's no wonder I was drawn to a study trip to Mexico to see the architecture and gardens of Luis Barragán (1902-1988), a master of modern architecture and landscape architecture. As our tour group from the university's School of Architecture saw firsthand, what makes Barragán's gardens modern and worth studying is their intimate engagement with the architecture they surround.



Casa González Luna, above left, reflects the interest of Barragán (shown) in traditional Mexican haciendas. Above right, Casa Ortega.

Barragán's outdoor work reveals that a modern garden can be more than just clean lines, gridded paving, carefully maintained lawns and repetitive plantings. He defines the edges of exterior rooms with paths that employ thresholds and subtle shifts in ground level to create elegant transitions. With exquisite economy, his gardens organize a rich experience of contrasting qualities of light and a diversity of textures. The element of water is used to transform surfaces, fill spaces with sound and inspire contemplation. Surprisingly, Barragán's gardens do not require meticulous upkeep to preserve their elegance. Rather, like classical Old World gardens, they improve over the years from the inevitable shifts and cracks caused by time, the elements and tree maturation.

As we almost microscopically examined Barragán gardens on our visit, I kept in mind his own way of working on projects. Once the client's needs and the project's uses were defined, Barragán would speak his dream of its eventual existence, orally composing a portrait of the place that was to be. He pictured himself walking in and out of the house, through courtyards and gardens, imagining movements and natural passages from one space to another. Join me on a Barragán garden tour, in his own style, tracing his imaginary steps through the three dreamscapes that became gardens.

CASA ORTEGA, MEXICO CITY

Barragán designed this house and garden for himself in the early 1940s, and it's considered a sort of laboratory where he tried out many of his ideas. My own first impression: I forgot I was in one of the largest cities in the world. This could easily be a hacienda in the Mexico countryside.

Entering the garden through an exterior corridor, made narrow by a concrete stair leading to the second floor, you are welcomed into a courtyard open to the sky. Negotiate a path of uneven stones and a canopy of trees lining a courtyard soon envelops you. To your right you'll see a path framing a concrete form of a woman in repose. Proceed beyond the courtyard into a narrow garden room dominated by a tree whose branches hang low and shade the space. Out the other side is another garden room defined by its high walls. Purple and orange vines draw

SHANE CLARK (2); PORTRAIT: BARRAGAN FOUNDATION, BIRSFELDEN, SWITZERLAND/PROLITTERIS, ZÜRICH, SWITZERLAND

I was taken in by the bravado and the sounds of Mexico...not so much the music, but the spirit—HERB ALPERT


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your eye to the silhouette of a sculpture of a dancing girl floating in the bright blue sky.

EL CONVENTO DE LAS CAPUCHINAS SACRAMENTARIAS, MEXICO CITY

Barragán designed this modernistic chapel for Capuchina nuns in the 1950s. When our group stepped through the massive concrete threshold into the dark foyer, a nun closed an oversize wood door, blocking out all sound and light from outside. It's an environment designed for contemplation and isolation, not so different from the spaces within Barragán's private residential walled gardens. In the courtyard, your view is directed to the sky by a raised cross on a white masonry wall. The courtyard dimensions are intimate, using scale to instill the appropriate reverence. Always reinforcing the feeling of a rural hacienda, Barragán sited a simple fountain, the sound of its water trickling down a massive black volcanic stone reverberating through the space.

CASA GONZÁLEZ LUNA, GUADALAJARA

This is one of Barragán's early houses built in Guadalajara. Before visiting here, we took a day trip, driving through the Sierra Madres, skimming dusty fields of agave and stopping at several worn-out towns, some of which had originated as haciendas. These provided the perfect context for understanding Barragán's influences and how he designed spaces of solitude reminiscent of his own experiences at his family's country hacienda.

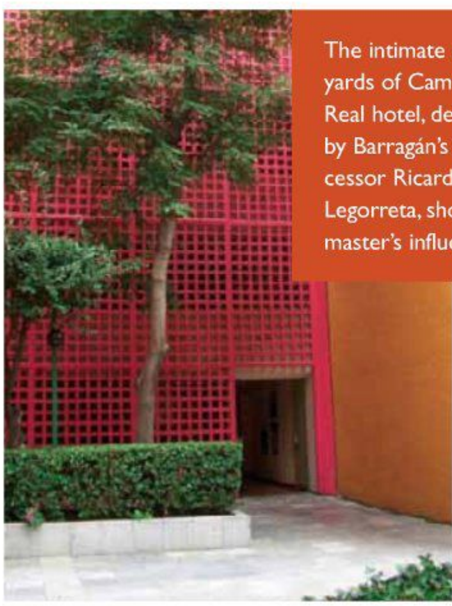
At the Casa González Luna (now Casa Iteso Clavigero), you are first guided by the sound of a fountain. Near cut-leaf philodendrons, an iron gate leads to a secluded back garden. Sunlight pours into the space, dynamically lighting yellow walls, which contrast with the dark clay paving and tiny black pebbles. The sound of falling water leads you into a garden enclosed by a wall with repetitive openings, which provide views to the trees beyond. Climb the back stairs to a series of roof terraces where there's a space open to the sky but surrounded by dense trees growing up from the ground below. Reinforcing the hedge, potted boxwood and bougainvillea seem to

emerge from the roof, their clay pots blending with the orange and brown mosaic of floor tiles. This is a masterful example of Barragán's "garden house" idea. As he says, "I think lovingly of beautiful oriental gardens bisected by arcades and walls of verdure, which form enchanting enclosures, lending value to the spaces, and converting nature into a genuine home." —**SHANE CLARK**

Mexico City: To arrange visits to Barragán's home and garden (Casa Luis Barragán) and the gardens of Casa Ortega (General Francisco Ramirez 12, Tacubaya), contact casabarragan@hotmail.com or informes@casaluisbarragan.org, or call 011-52-55-55-15-4908 or 011-52-55-5272-4945. El Convento de las Capuchinas Sacramentarias, Hidalgo 43, Tlalpan. For information, call 011-52-55-55-73-23-95. Camino Real Mexico hotel, see www.caminoreal.com/mexico_i/.

Guadalajara: Casa González Luna (Casa Iteso Clavigero), José Guadalupe Zuno # 2083 (between Chapultepec and Marsella Avenues). For information, call 33-3615-8347 or 3615-2242 or see www.casaclavigero.iteso.mx.

FYI: The Barragan Foundation, a not-for-profit institution based in Birsfelden, Switzerland, was founded in 1996 with the purpose of preserving, analyzing and diffusing knowledge about the work of Luis Barragán. For information on the life and works of Luis Barragán, see www.barragan-foundation.org.

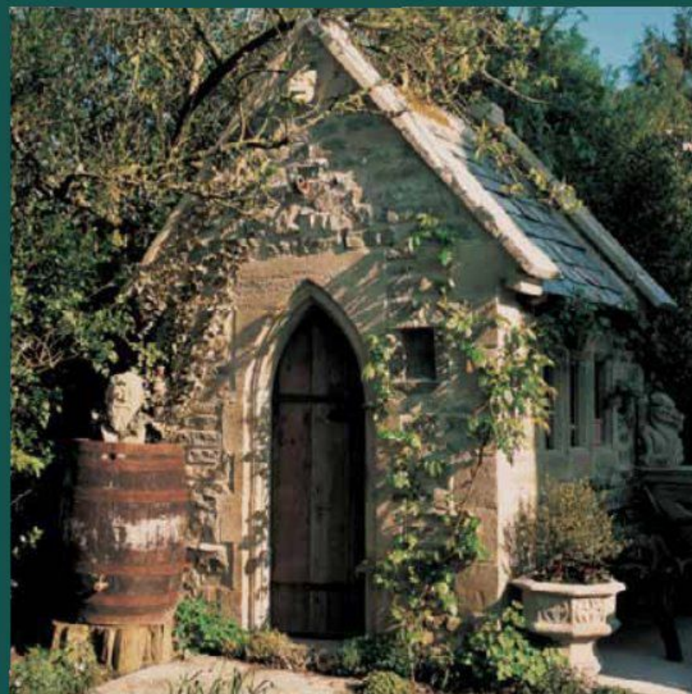


The intimate courtyards of Camino Real hotel, designed by Barragán's successor Ricardo Legorreta, show the master's influence.

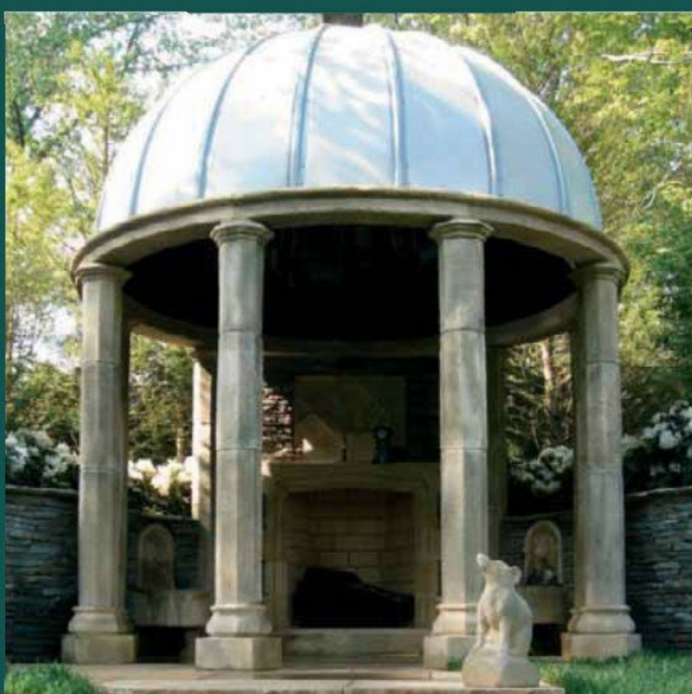
SHANE CLARK



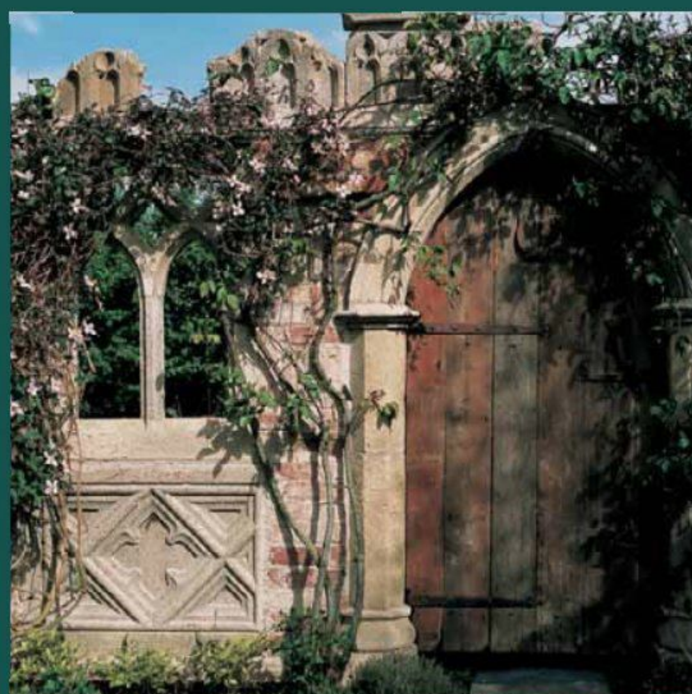
The Courtyard



The Potting Shed



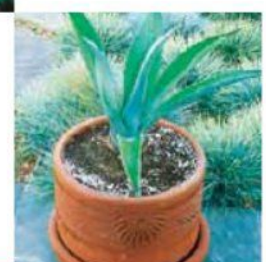
The Temple



The Garden Façade







GREEN DESIGN

18 pages of gardens and ideas that display the best in earth-friendly sustainability—cutting-edge but comfortable, resource-saving but beautiful

ROGER FOLEY; RICHARD FELBER; SAXON HOLT

CHANGE THE WORLD ONE BACKYARD AT A TIME—THAT'S THE AMBITIOUS AND NOBLE GOAL OF THE GREEN DESIGN MOVEMENT. Leading landscape architects, visionary community leaders and businesspeople, as well as tuned-in backyard gardeners, have led the way to landscapes that are sustainable, organic and otherwise earth-friendly. Here we share the best of their state-of-the-art ideas. Read on if you want to grow a meadow or a green roof, save water or energy, stop mowing or spraying. Study the gardens, plants and methods on the next 18 pages and we think you will notice the same thing we have: Green design has come a long way very quickly, and you can create a garden that is beautiful, interesting and comfortable for outdoor living, relaxing and entertaining while at the same time feeling the satisfaction of conserving our planet's precious resources for future generations.

MEADOW MYSTIQUE

The power of the meadow lies in its seeming naturalness and spontaneity. But to mimic nature takes some art, as these examples show

THERE ARE TWO SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT ON MEADOWS. ONE IS that meadows are beautiful, sustainable and wildlife-friendly. No sooner do you stop cutting the grass than a host of desirable wildflowers and insects will flock to your turf. This is truly the best alternative to the traditional manicured, chemically enhanced sward of sterile turf grass that requires a regime of unrelenting toil to keep it pristine.

The second school of thought has it that meadows are the ecological in-crowd's form of moral high ground; the apparent simplicity and "naturalness" of the meadow is just a front for a constant battle with the "wrong" wildflowers, invasive grasses and angry neighbors who do not appreciate its unkempt appearance 11 months out of the year.

Perhaps it is fairest to say that meadows can indeed be natural, beautiful, sustainable and wildlife-friendly, but they can also take some work. Each one is an individual created by a confluence of soil type, seed bank, climatic zone and maintenance regime. We collected these examples from high-maintenance to low to share the lessons learned.





Above: Yellow goldenrod lines the fence rail with pink cosmos beyond, filling a former potato field in the Hamptons. Left and right: Native grasses keep this dune area open, in contrast with the garden around the house.

A Hamptons Potato Field This 4-acre field (above) formerly used for potatoes and grazing cattle is a blaze of pink cosmos every July. Local landscape architect Mark Moskowitz found that wildflower meadows face strong weed competition, and the best results are obtained with annuals. An ongoing regime to reduce competition is key: At the end of the season, grasses must be mown and the clippings removed before they can seed themselves. The cycle starts in mid-April when the field is sown with a mix of bachelor's buttons and cosmos. All the sowing is done by hand to avoid a "drilled" look. The meadow flowers first with bachelor's buttons, then the cosmos in late summer. The field is mown in fall, then plowed and rototilled in spring when the cycle starts over with reseeding. **bonus:** Daisies and goldenrod appear alongside the cosmos. No herbicides are used after the establishment phase.

■ *Mark Moskowitz, 631-329-5971; e-mail markmos11@aol.com.*

Long Island Dunes Native shrubs such as bayberry, beach plum and switch grass gave a bushy, enclosed character to this area of dunes (left and right) between house and beach. Landscape designer Michael Blake cleared the shrubs to the edges of the woodland to open and frame the view and make a lighter landscape. He planted or seeded all natives: hair grass (*De-*

ROGER FOLEY (3)





Mediterranean Alpine Meadow

The owner of the Hess Collection Winery (right), in California's Napa Valley, hails from Switzerland, land of alpine meadows, and he wanted a garden to remind him of home. The clay site is typical of northern California: It has rainy winters and dry summers and is in full sun all day. Landscape architects Peter Walker & Partners brought in West Coast grasses expert John Greenlee. For his Napa Valley interpretation of an alpine meadow, Greenlee chose Mediterranean-adapted plants with the right "feel" and no higher than about 12 to 18 inches. Color was required year-round. The "grassy" component is a mix of sedges: *Carex remota*, *C. texensis* and *C. divulsa*. Bulbs and perennials with low basal foliage and long-stemmed flowers mimic the typical alpine flora. And thanks to the Mediterranean climate, flowering bulbs make a show through the year, including ixia, ipheion, scilla, oxalis and narcissus. Other than deadheading, maintenance is limited to some irrigation and one annual cut.—**JOANNA FORTNAM**

For more information on the work of John Greenlee, call 909-629-9045 or see www.greenleenursery.com.

JERRY HARPUR (2); SAXON HOLT



schampsia flexuosa), which flowers in June, July and August when his clients are at the house, and broomsedge (*Andropogon virginicus*) for late-season interest. Bearberry (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*), a creeping evergreen ground cover, subtly highlights the paths and the tops of the hummocks. No fertilizer, irrigation or soil amendments were used on the dry, sandy soil. **bonus:** The hair grass, so-called for its long, fine stems, brushes softly against bare skin, adding a sensual dimension to the spare beauty of the landscape.

For Michael Blake, landscape designer and herbalist, visit www.ubhusa.com.

Wisconsin Prairie

This former cornfield-turned-weedy-plot (above and right) was restored to prairie by Neil Diboll. He devised a seed mix to suit the clay soil, comprising 70 percent herbaceous perennials, e.g., coneflowers (*Echinacea purpurea*), wild bergamot (*Monarda fistulosa*), goldenrod (*Solidago rigida*), and 30 percent grasses, e.g., little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*), Indian grass (*Sorghastrum nutans*) and side-oats grama grass (*Bouteloua curtipendula*). The sunniest area was cleared of vegetation before sowing, mulching and watering. During the first season, the new prairie was mown at 6 inches to keep seed growth in check. Now a controlled burn takes place every second or third spring, and the prairie is mown every other spring. **bonus:** Peak flowering occurs in late July and early August, but the fall and winter prairie is also beautiful with grasses glowing gold and seed heads still hanging on for the birds.

For Neil Diboll, visit www.prairienursery.com.



Far left and below: This area of Wisconsin prairie was re-created from an old corn field. Mown paths and seating tame the wildness. Top right: In Napa, low-growing bulbs and perennials mimic an alpine meadow.



GARDENS IN THE SKY

Green roofs can serve as cooling oases, filtering water and air. Here's why, where and when they make sense



Above: As part of the "greening of Chicago," a 21,000-square-foot green roof was added to City Hall by Mayor Richard M. Daley in 2001. Below: A lush living roof of echeveria and sedum on a garden shed in New Zealand.

SOMETIMES CALLED ECOROOFS, LIVING roofs or sky gardens, green roofs take the concept of ancient Babylonian roof gardens and Scandinavian sod roofs to new levels using high-tech materials. Today's models replace the impervious surfaces of conventional roofs with a lasagna-like layering that includes waterproofing, drainage, growing medium and plants. The end result is a garden in an unexpected place that lends aesthetic appeal as it benefits the environment.

Quick crash course: There are two main types of green roofs—extensive and intensive. Extensive roofs have a shallow media layer of 1 to 6 inches, use low-growing plants and require little maintenance. Intensive roofs are often intended for recreational use and can, surprisingly, have depths of 15 feet or more and a wide variety of plants (even trees)— but they also require more maintenance and cost more. As you'd expect, plants on a green roof, especially extensive types, need to be unflappable in the face of heat, drought, wind and frost. Sedums and other succulents have naturally become signature plants for low-profile green roofs, as have herbs, mosses and some grasses. Native plants are also being used.

Popular in Europe for several decades, the idea of plant-covered roofs is becoming more common in the United States, thanks to continuing innovations and interest in eco-friendly building from designers, engineers and architects. Worldwide, green roofs appear on a wide array of structures, including garages and garden sheds, suburban homes, libraries, hotels, industrial plants, and apartment and office buildings. The largest example in North America is the 10.4-acre green roof on the Rouge facility of the Ford Motor Company in Dearborn, Michigan, designed by environmental architect William McDonough. Recently the American Society of Landscape Architects completed a green roof on its headquarters in Washington, D.C.

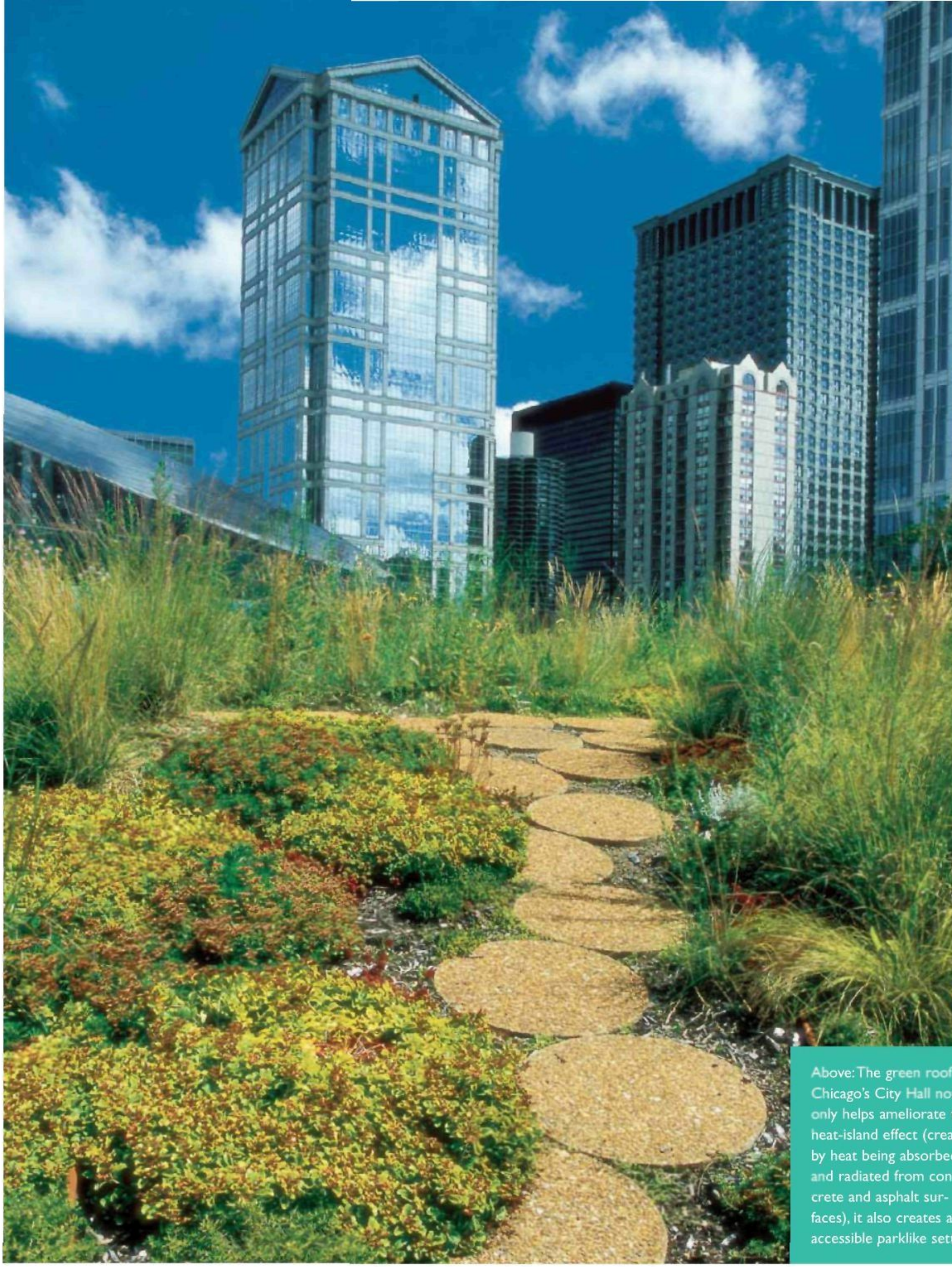
A few far-thinking designers promoted green roofs in the early 20th century, notably Frank Lloyd Wright, Le Corbusier and Roberto Burle Marx. In the United States an early example is Freeway Park in Seattle, designed by Lawrence Halprin in the early 70s.

But it is to Germany that we are indebted for much of the new green-roof technology; research has been going on there since the 1970s as a way to alleviate urban environmental problems. Today some 80 to 100 million square meters of green roofing grace the skylines of Germany, and some European cities actually require them on new buildings.

It's not just verdant plant coverage that makes green roofs green—they provide many benefits to the environment. They absorb rainwater and release it slowly, reducing the volume that enters overtaxed storm-water systems and alleviating



WILLARD CLAY (2); ANDREW LAWSON



Above: The green roof on Chicago's City Hall not only helps ameliorate the heat-island effect (created by heat being absorbed and radiated from concrete and asphalt surfaces), it also creates an accessible parklike setting.

erosion. A green roof can soak up an estimated 50 to 95 percent of rain falling on a site. And the growing media filters water and air, trapping chemicals, toxins and dust.

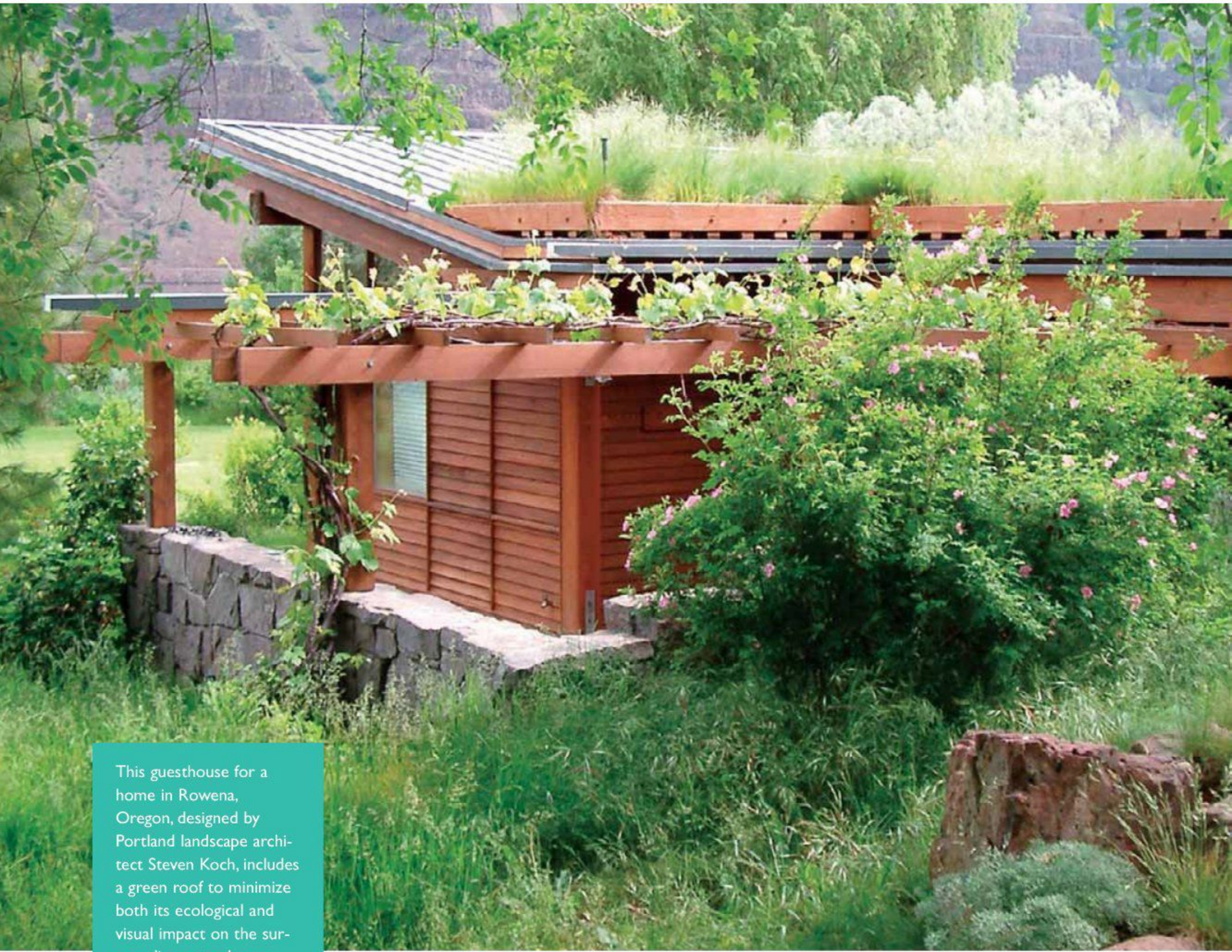
In an urban environment green roofs mitigate the "heat-island" effect caused by the retention of heat in concrete and asphalt surfaces. Cities like Atlanta can be 10 degrees warmer than the surrounding countryside—no small difference in the middle of a sultry July. A green roof can reduce sizzling rooftop temperatures of 150 to 175 degrees by as much as 80 degrees.

Green roofs also provide habitats for native species and serve as links between natural areas for wildlife like insects and nesting birds. One of the oldest green roofs in Europe, the Moos lake water treatment plant in Switzerland, has become a haven for native plant species, some otherwise extinct in the area.

Though installation of green roofs is more expensive than for conventional roofs, the financial benefits can far outweigh the initial cost. A green roof can double or triple the life of the roof; European versions have lasted 40 to 75 years (a typical roof lasts only 10 to 20). And a building with a green roof requires less cooling in summer and heating in winter.

Never underestimate aesthetic and psychological benefits as well: the glare of shingles radiating waves of heat exchanged for a lush green living roof.—**JENNY ANDREWS**

For more information, visit www.greenroofs.com, www.greenroofs.net and www.roofscapes.com.



This guesthouse for a home in Rowena, Oregon, designed by Portland landscape architect Steven Koch, includes a green roof to minimize both its ecological and visual impact on the surrounding natural area.



GREEN DESIGN

STREET HARVEST

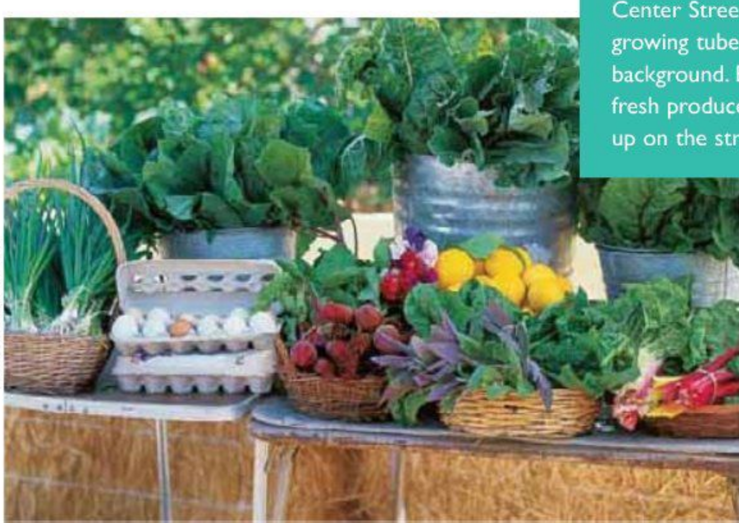
Downtown Oakland discovers the power of organic veggies

FRESH, ORGANIC AND LOCAL COMPRISE A CORE PRINCIPLE OF SUSTAINABLE living that is tough to achieve in a gritty urban area like West Oakland, California, a neighborhood hemmed in by freeways and industry. Just one grocery store serves the roughly 30,000 inhabitants. And although corner stores abound, these tend toward food of the canned and preserved variety rather than fresh and organic.

Willow Rosenthal of City Slicker Farms, shown above, has been a prime mover in the transformation of six empty lots throughout the neighborhood into thriving organic kitchen gardens staffed by volunteers. They now produce vegetables, eggs, honey and fruit year-round, to be sold either at a stand at the Center Street Farm or in a local farmers' market. Favorite crops include tomatoes, chard, eggplant, chilies, turnip greens, collards, mustard and kale. The gardeners make their own quality organic compost and maximize the limited space by rigging up vertical growing systems using tubes filled with growing medium.

The overarching goal of the various groups involved in the fresh-food project is to encourage local people to become skilled in food growing and chicken raising—and Willow is already taking the idea to interested green thumbs in the form of starter-kit planter boxes for backyards.—JF

Above: Willow Rosenthal of City Slickers at the Center Street Farm with growing tubes in the background. Below: A fresh produce stand set up on the street corner.



MARION BRENNER (3)

■ *Visit www.cityslickerfarms.org or e-mail cityslickerfarms@riseup.net. Tax deductible donations can be made to OBUGS (City Slicker Farms) and sent to 737 Henry St., Oakland, CA 94607.*

GREEN DESIGN

LET IT RAIN

From a green point of view, rainwater run-off is a creative opportunity, not a waste disposal problem



RAIN GARDENS NOT ONLY SOUND ROMANTIC, BUT ALSO HAVE A highly practical function, which is why green-minded gardeners love them. Prosaically known as bioretention basins, rain gardens slow the passage of water off hard surfaces (roofs, driveways, paving) into the drainage system and allow it to do what comes naturally—that is, filter slowly into the ground. This has the benefit of recharging the water table and, as the moisture filters through plants, soil and rock, removing pollutants.

Designers in rainy climates are increasingly waking up to the fact that the slower, natural process offers them a creative opportunity to design and plant swales, streams and ponds. In this Long Island garden, the clients had a problem with water pooling on the lawn and the driveway after rain. The runoff, containing lawn chemicals and pollutants, found its way straight into Mecox Bay. Local landscape designer Thomas Muse redirected the water into a swale built to look like a winding creek bed. He lined it with black pebbles and planted the banks with natives that can stand the dry periods between rains—the result is practical, attractive and wildlife-friendly.—JF

■ *For Thomas Muse, see www.musedesign.net. For more on the design of rain gardens, see www.raingardens.org.*

From left: A system of ponds and swales controls water runoff from this Long Island home. The black-pebble-lined stream bed directs water away from the house and driveway, allowing slow filtration into the ground.





RICHARD FELBER (3)







GREEN DESIGN

OUTBACK SURVIVORS

This dramatic and distinctive garden in the Australian outback puts a new twist on classic Mediterranean gardening



WIGANDIA, THE GARDEN OF WILLIAM MARTIN IN THE DRY BUSH of western Victoria, Australia, flourishes on thin topsoil atop the red scoria (volcanic cinders) of Mount Noorat. Average rainfall is 25 to 28 inches per year; fertilizer and irrigation, zilch. But as the contrast with the bare hills beyond his garden testifies, Martin has a genius for making drought-tolerant plants work together in a way that is vividly Australian. These lessons from the Outback are relevant to all gardens where the conservation of natural resources is a concern, but particularly the Mediterranean zones of Southern California and the Southwest.

Arid gardening tips from Wigandia:

- It's obvious, but use only plant groups compatible with your climate. In this tough environment at Wigandia plants from South Africa, New Zealand and the Canary Islands grow side by side.
- Stop gardening. That's right, stop weeding, mowing, deadheading, pruning. To allow sustainable plant communities to take hold, test plants' toughness by encouraging them to naturalize, and you'll begin to get the concept of "relaxed colony gardening." It's just more fun.
- Don't overtree or overshrub your garden. Under arid conditions woody plants create too much of what Martin calls "root thuggery"—competition for root space, nutrients and water.
- Plant in layers, as nature does. Start with weed-suppressing ground covers that carpet the ground and work up.
- De-emphasize deciduous material and play up evergreens—they look good all year, which is important in regions like this where the seasons are not so pronounced as in the Northern Hemisphere. Add to this plants that "stress" gracefully, for example succulents and gray-leaved plants that look great in the wetter "plump" months but also are attractive in dry seasons.
- Martin questions the water-saving properties of organic mulch. Heresy! But he explains that in an arid garden a layer of mulch merely relocates water higher in the soil profile than it normally would be, encouraging plants to raise their roots. The effect is a "soft" plant heavily reliant on this artificial layer.
- Instead of mulch, Martin recommends leaving bare soil to "crust" naturally—in hot weather, let the top half-inch or so bake and seal in moisture. Use low "carpeting" plants that work as a living blanket to cool the soil. Use local stone or gravel toppings that look appropriate and don't need continual replacement.—**JF**

- *For design services and more ideas, see www.wigandia.com.*

JERRY HARPUR (3)



From left: The Victoriana building and exoticism of the plants make this scene unmistakably Australian. Cactus cuttings sprout legs to eccentric effect. Agaves take pride of place in this corrugated iron garden structure.

GREEN DESIGN

BIONIC BOTANY

Cutting-edge work at the frontiers of plant breeding is giving us an ever-greater choice of disease-resistant plants that minimize spraying

PERHAPS OVERLOOKED AS WE DROOL OVER THE LATEST FLOWER colors and exotic newcomers are the less-showy aspects of many of today's plant introductions. Behind-the-scenes work in plant breeding combines the efforts of plant geneticists, government workers, globe-trekking plant explorers, nursery experts and backyard gardeners. Their goal is not only to make prettier flowers, but also to create plants with real disease resistance, ironing out the kinks that can cost us dearly in garden chemical warfare. This is a big business, especially for fruit and vegetable crops, but it also applies to trees, shrubs, herbaceous perennials, bulbs and annuals. The benefit for the green gardener is great plants that need fewer or no pesticides or fungicides to grow. Whom do we have to thank for this new generation of earth-friendly, almost bionic plants?

The hybridizers constantly seek to improve the disease resistance of favorite plants by combining genes of one highly successful species with those of another. For example: The Rutgers series of dogwoods combines the hugely popular but anthracnose-susceptible *Cornus florida* with resistant *C. kousa*. Paul Cappiello and Don Shadow, authors of *Dogwoods* (Timber Press, 2005) consider the resulting hybrids to be "relatively free from dogwood anthracnose." They also turn out to be free from powdery mildew (another *C. florida* affliction), and their hybrid nature makes them very vigorous. I have one (*C.* x *rutgersensis* 'Rutdan' Celestial®) growing happily in my own garden in New Jersey. Other examples include crape myrtles (lagerstroemia) that show resistance to powdery mildew because of their *L. fauriei* genes. 'Natchez' is probably the best-known. Cultivars with *L. fauriei* behind them are also hardier than pure *L. indica* selections. The National Arboretum in Washington, D.C., pursued a hybridizing program, and we can thank John Creech (who brought *L. fauriei* to the United States from Japan) and Don Egolf (who worked with crape myrtles at the arboretum) for their efforts.

Right: 'Natchez' crape myrtle in fall, a hybrid known for its resistance to powdery mildew. Below: Knock Out™ rose, a hugely commercial plant that was deliberately bred to be free of many common rose problems.





Sharp-eyed plantspeople still somehow discover and then propagate disease-resistant selections. Think about 'Minnie Pearl' garden phlox. Plantswoman Karen Partlow found this stunning new native phlox along the road in Kemper, Mississippi. It appears to be a naturally occurring hybrid between *Phlox maculata* and possibly *P. glaberrima*. The aspect unique to the hybrid is the amazingly early flowering period—plus no mildew and a spreading habit.

Old-fashioned plant breeders cross and recross a huge number of selections in pursuit of new wonder plants. This isn't a newfangled, high-tech method, but it continues to produce results. The best performers are singled out for propagation and introduction—that's how we got Knock Out™ rose, which was developed in an amateur's backyard rather than a commercial nursery. It took 15 years from the time Bill Radler made the first cross to get Knock Out™ released on the market. He painstakingly crossed the roses he felt had the best attributes—cold hardiness, disease resistance, compact form, long bloom season and so on—until he arrived at one plant that combined them all.

The lab guys call on embryo culture when seeds from genetically dissimilar crosses will not naturally germinate and produce vigorous plants. This involves removing the embryo from the seed and growing it under laboratory conditions to ensure its survival and development. Embryo culture is the process that led to the hot new Orienpet lily hybrids, which combine the spectacular bloom characteristics of Oriental lilies with the disease-resistance of the Trumpet types. Look for the latest stunning selections like pink 'Scene Stealer', yellow 'Caravan' and creamy 'Orange Crush', as well as other lab creations, now and in the future.—**RAY ROGERS**

SUSAN A. ROTH (2)



GREEN DESIGN

THE NEW WAVE

A Dutch garden design movement changes the way we look at plants

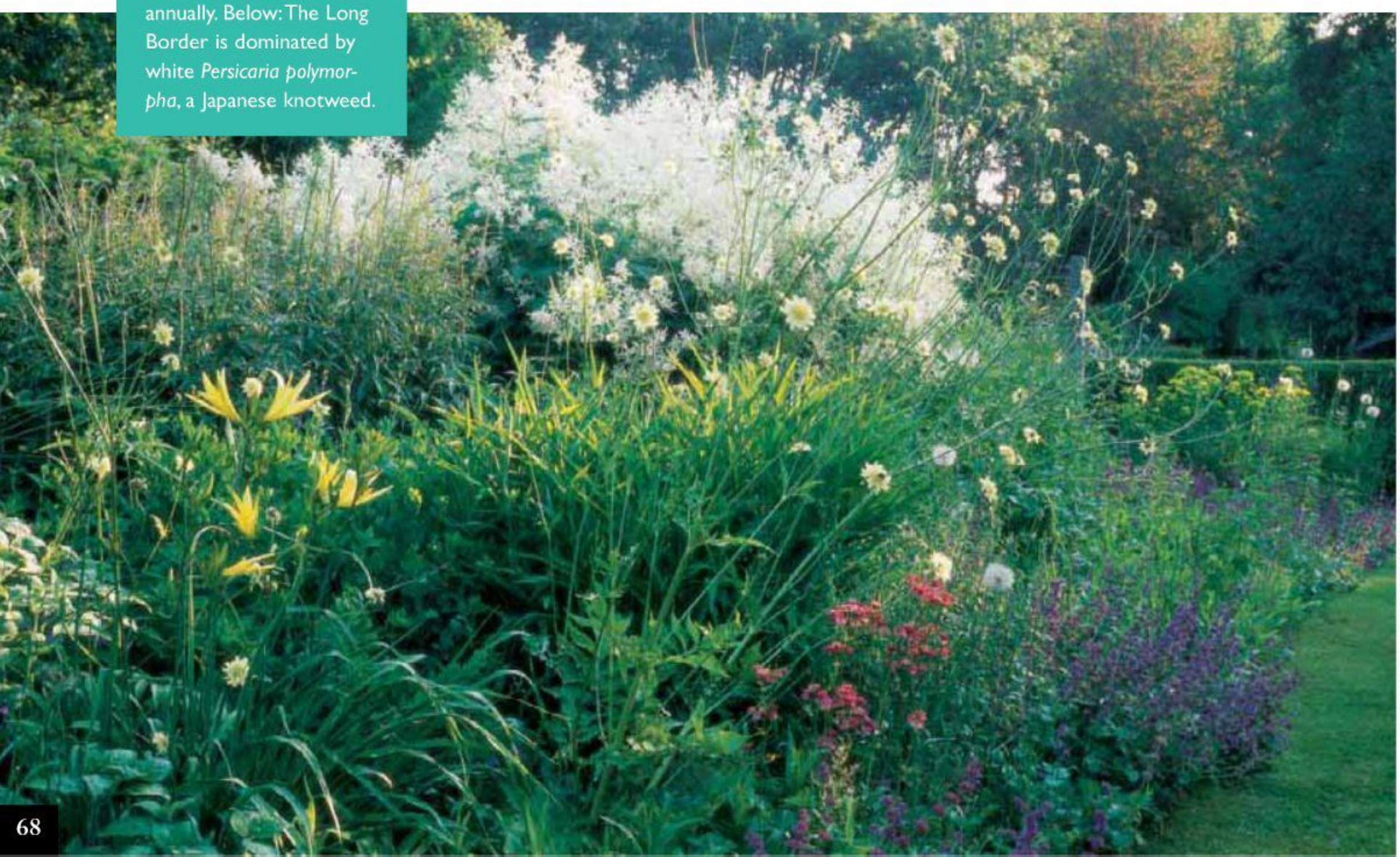


PIET OUDOLF AND HENK GERRITSEN, PROMINENT DUTCH PROponents of the New Wave Movement, have crafted their own earth-friendly approach to horticulture and landscape design. For more than 20 years, they have been designing "wild," naturalistic gardens in which reseeding species—annuals and biennials—as well as tall and bold perennials are left to mimic the combinations found in nature and, to a large extent, choose their own places in the planting scheme.

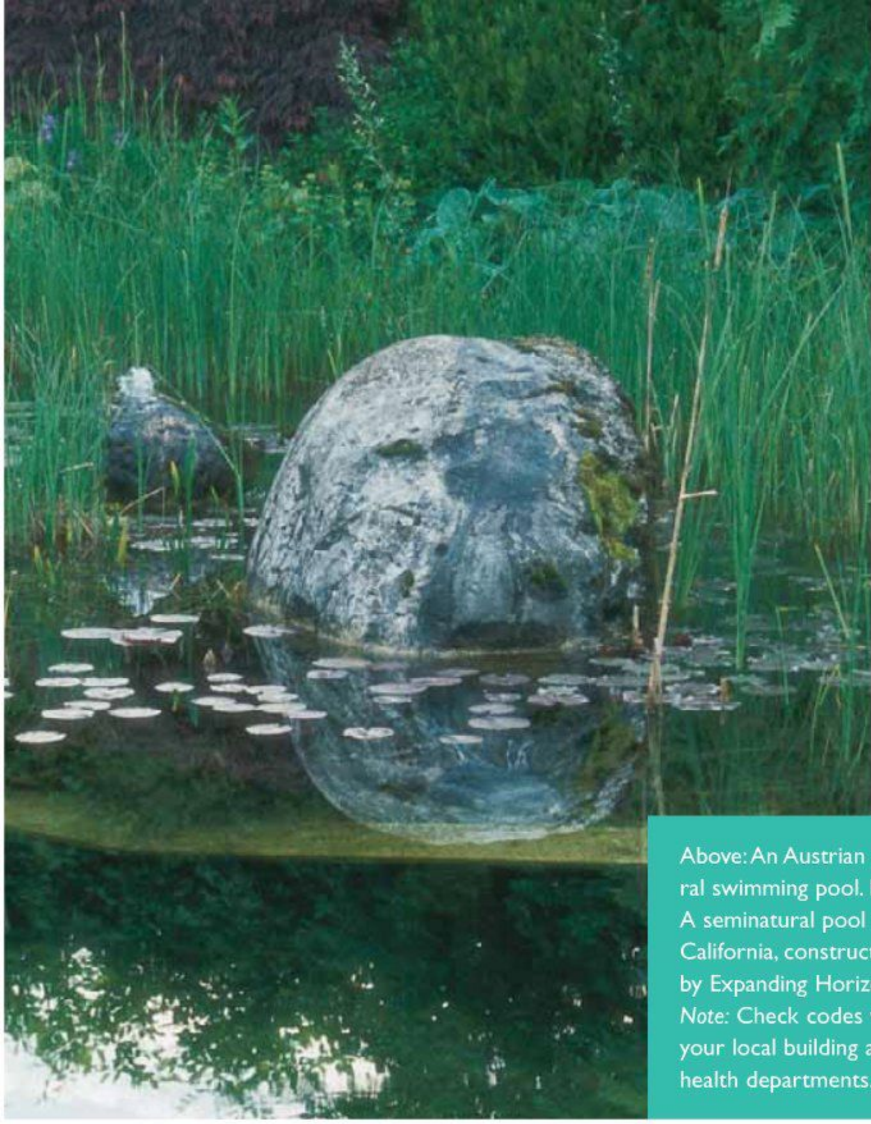
Instead of strictly native plants (which in some cases can aggressively reseed), Oudolf and Gerritsen search out and rely on a selection of species whose ecological requirements match those of a given site. If their ideas evolved from a desire to revolutionize contemporary landscape design, it has led to an ecological agenda. Their call is for dynamic, ecological plantings that attract wildlife, insects, butterflies and birds—which at the same time sustain themselves without pesticides, insecticides, complex water systems and a battalion of laborers.

Take a look at what this New Wave approach amounts to in these photos of Hank Gerritsen's Priona Garden in Holland. Also see www.prionatuinen.com.—**DONNA DORIAN**

Above: Planted with corn cockle (*Agrostemma githago*), poppies and cornflowers, Henk Gerritson's poppy garden reseeds annually. Below: The Long Border is dominated by white *Persicaria polymorpha*, a Japanese knotweed.



CURTICE TAYLOR (2); MICHAEL LITTLEWOOD (2)



give access to the water. The pool looks attractive all year and adds to the garden, rather than being a glaringly artificial blue element that is out of commission all winter.

So far, so good. But, although there is no reason why a European-style NSP shouldn't work anywhere, hot climates included, the tolerance of the end user for the occasional leaf in the water and a layer of silt on the pond floor is key. Two U.S. builders of NSPs have tweaked the principles to reassure their clients. Mick Hilleary of Kansas-based Total Habitat includes a small amount of UV sterilizers as added insurance, but notes that biological filters do kill most bacteria. Bryan Morse of Expanding Horizons in Vista, California, builds modified NSPs that include concrete walls, a pond sweep, and low-level doses of copper, silver and chlorine ("about the amount you'd find in drinking water") to guarantee clarity.

In certain hot spots around the country, such as northern Minnesota, Arizona and northern California, people have grown up swimming in natural lakes, ponds and creeks, and demand for NSPs is high. But in southern Florida and Southern California, where the cult of the turquoise pool is strong, chlorine lovers have yet to overcome their inhibitions. However, Hilleary conjectures that this idea will take off: "In 50 years' time this is how we'll all be doing swimming pools," he says.—**JF**

Above: An Austrian natural swimming pool. Below: A seminatural pool in California, constructed by Expanding Horizons. *Note:* Check codes with your local building and health departments.

■ *English landscape architect Michael Littlewood, author of* Natural Swimming Pools *(see Amazon.com), is an expert in this field; see www.ecodesignscape.co.uk. See also totalhabitat.com and expandinghorizons.biz.*

GREEN DESIGN

SWIMMING NATURALLY

Chlorine doesn't have to be a part of the summer swim season

SWIMMING IN LAKES, RIVERS AND PONDS TENDS TO DIVIDE PEOPLE into country folk and townies, with fears of pollution, snapping turtles and mud-dwelling creepy crawlies vexatious to the suburban soul. But fearless free spirits in Europe (mainly Germans, Swiss and Austrians) have reinvented the whole idea as a backyard feature—the natural swimming pool (NSP).

The classic NSP dispenses with toxic pool chemicals such as chlorine and does not need annual or biannual refilling, thus saving water. It functions as a self-contained ecosystem that consists of a pool with two zones, one for swimming and one for plants. The aquatic plants are rooted in a shallow base of aggregate, shingle and gravel and they act as living filters, drawing food from the water in the form of decomposing vegetation, pollutants and bacteria, thereby cleansing it.

The result is a clear pool for swimming surrounded by a natural fringe of plants. A deck, stone slabs or paved area can



ALTERNATIVE LAWNS

Giving up the perfect mown, irrigated lawn can save you time and money—and reduce air and water pollution



FOR OVER 20 YEARS, CALIFORNIA NURSERYMAN JOHN GREENLEE has promoted the idea of using all types of grasses in garden design. Part of his vision is a bold new approach to lawns.

"Conventional lawns are the gas-guzzling SUVs of the plant world, requiring constant mowing and summer irrigation to keep them looking good," Greenlee says. On a gallon-for-gallon basis, power mowers are far more polluting than cars. According to the California Air Resources Board, 2006 lawn-mower engines, per gallon of gas, contribute 93 times more smog-forming emissions than 2006 cars. Water runoff pollution is another downside: To keep turf perma-green and weed-free requires a cocktail of fertilizers, pesticides and fungicides applied regularly via the irrigation system.

The Case for the Alternative Lawn Greenlee advocates partnering with nature to make what he calls "natural lawns" using a whole range of grasses or grasslike plants. "Every region and every ecology in this country has its own regionally native sods, which, with very little mowing or cutting, grow naturally as a turf," he says.

Greenlee has created many sustainable alternatives to conventional lawns. Composed of region- and climate-specific plants that are low-growing by nature, these alternative lawns don't need constant mowing to stay short. A handful of trims a year, depending on the plants and site, will suffice. Compare this with 30 to 40 mowings a year to maintain a conventional lawn.

Designing Alternative Lawns Most designers would agree that in certain situations there is no aesthetic or functional substitute for a lawn. Garden-floor treatments define function, and lawns suit areas of high use such as family games spaces and also provide a visual foil for plantings and other features.

However, if one thinks of lawns simply as low, evergreen ground-level panels, there are alternative lawns to suit every region and type of space. Native grass species, such as buffalo grass, are tough enough for soccer games yet soft enough for bare feet.

Grasses can be mixed with low-growing flowering broadleaf plants, and they work brilliantly as a transition between formal garden and meadow or woodland, connecting cultivated space and the wider landscape. Alternative lawns thrive on steep slopes and in deep shade where conventional types would have difficulty if not fail outright.

With certain types of plantings, alternative lawns are a better choice on aesthetic as well as sustainable grounds. For example, in xeriscape gardens suited to arid regions and Mediterranean-style landscapes, manicured, emerald-green turf grass looks incongruous alongside plants that thrive in poor, dry soil.

Aesthetically, embracing the look of alternative lawns involves a shift in attitudes. Taking pride in the kind of conventional lawn that acts as an immaculate place setting for the house is an entrenched tradition. But longer grass length and some flowering "weeds" do not necessarily equate to lack of grooming, and a family lawn doesn't need to be a uniform, chemically dependent space.

Plants for Natural Lawns This brief list offers some native and sustainable grasses for lawns around the country: **West Coast:** *Carex praegracilis* (syn. *C. pansa*), California meadow sedge; *Agrostis pallens*, seashore bent grass. **Prairie states:** *Buchloe dactyloides*, buffalo grass. **New Mexico, Texas:** *Bouteloua gracilis*, blue grama grass. **Midwest:** *Carex pennsylvanica*, Pennsylvania sedge; *Carex appalachica*, Appalachian sedge. **Pacific Northwest, Montana, parts of northern California:** *Festuca idahoensis*, Idaho fescue. **Northern states:** *Festuca rubra*, red fescue. **Southeast, including Texas, Georgia, Louisiana, Florida:** *Carex alba-lutescens*, Florida meadow sedge; *Carex perdentata*, Texas hill sedge; *Carex texensis*, Texas sedge (not native but sustainable for lawns).—RUTH CHIVERS









Far left: A blue fescue sward by a path. From left, clockwise: Buffalo grass lawn (*Buchloe dactyloides*) in New Mexico. Carex lawn by John Greenlee. Prairie junegrass lawn (*Koeleria macrantha*) by Bernard Trainor.

SAXON HOLT (3); MARION BRENNER





SALAD DAYS
Left: Standing on the back porch of her Woodbury, Connecticut, antiques shop, The Elemental Garden, Tracey Young tosses salad in an 1870s cast-iron tazza urn translated into a neoclassical salad bowl. She uses an antique English trowel and gardening fork as salad utensils. Urn and utensils were cleaned with steel wool, sand and salad oil.

DINING ORNAMENTS
Right: Here a 1930s cast-stone English birdbath becomes a table with the addition of a round glass top. Above it hangs an antique French glass cloche, originally intended to protect tender seedlings. Turned upside down and wired, it now functions as a chandelier. A carved-stone English sink becomes a raw bar and drink cooler when set on legs devised of stone wall coping.

ELEMENTS OF DESIRE

Connecticut garden antiques dealer Tracey Young brings renewed youth and function to objects of old

BY DONNA DORIAN PHOTOS BY ANDRE BARANOWSKI







Tracey Young returns from her buying trips to Great Britain with 18th-, 19th- and 20th-century garden antiques and architectural elements, impressive objects made from stone, terra-cotta, cast and wrought iron, glass and zinc. But she learned early on in her career as a garden antiques dealer that she had to show her clients how to use the extraordinary pieces she collects. As a result, her Woodbury, Connecticut, shop, The Elemental Garden, which she named to reflect the nature of the materials she works with, is always a tribute to her imagination. Here, artifacts from the past find new life and function—chimney pots are transformed into floral containers, stone sinks are refitted into drink coolers and potting tables, French bollard chains are hung as rain chains or draped like window valances. Everywhere, Tracey's manner of finding modern uses for old items has the brilliance of the obvious.

"Recycling antiques is very English in spirit, but the English tend to recycle objects from the past by reusing them in their original manner, while I promote their use in innovative ways," explains Tracey. "What draws me to an object is form and texture, but being a gardener allows me to look at how a piece can become an integral part of a garden. Each piece, like a garden, has a life of its own that is always adapting to nature."

■ *The Elemental Garden: 259 Main St. South, Woodbury, CT 06798. For more information, call 203-263-6500 or see www.theelementalgarden.com.*

PERFECT COUPLE
Left: Probably originally custom-designed for a major house, a handsome pair of circa 1860 biscuit-colored English terra-cotta chimney pots, stamped J.M. Blashfield, are converted into container boxes. Set at the front of the path, with 'Tardiva' hydrangea standards behind, they add a sense of formality to the back entranceway.



STONE AGE
Right: "English stone is more impervious than most stone found elsewhere in the world, and its neutral coloring has a universal appeal," says Tracey. Here, set beneath a rose trellis, an 18th-century horse trough from Bath has become home to a collection of water plants from purple and green elephant ears to papyrus. Depending on the region, English stone ranges in color from creamy whites to honey browns and taupe grays.





FOUND ART

Left: Standing alone, terra-cotta and carved-sandstone pier caps set on top of a stone fence make a compelling decorative arrangement. Here, cast-iron finials that once sat on top of telephone poles are matched with cast-iron mill wheels from a mill in North Yorkshire, England.

POT AWAY

Right: A carved 1870s Yorkshire stone sink is married to four early-19th-century carved legs to become an attractive potting table, where Tracey makes use of vintage garden tools. At the far side of the barn, a French bollard chain—originally used in parks to keep visitors off the grass—finds a new purpose as a rain chain, which directs rain into the galvanized water bucket below.

"ENGLISH STONE PIECES HAVE BEAUTIFUL FORM WITHOUT BEING FUSSY, AND THE WORKMANSHIP IS EXTRAORDINARY, EVEN IN VERY RUSTIC PIECES"







SENTRY BOOTH

Left: This circa 1910 French sheet- and wrought-iron sentry booth would have kept rain off police guards on a street corner. Today, coupled with a tall Blashfield chimney pot, it has been transformed into a unique focal point at the front of the house.

TEA FOR TWO

Right: Coupled with a pair of 1930s polished-steel French chairs, this mid-19th-century biscuit-colored terra-cotta capital, topped with a glass round, finds renewed life as a tea table in the garden. As appropriate as it is for the outdoors, this piece exemplifies how well-suited recycled architectural elements can be to the interior of a house as well.



where to find it

- **Gramercy Garden & Antiques Show: March 2007; 69th Regiment Armory at Lexington Ave. and 26th St., NYC. Call 212-255-0020 or see www.stellashows.com.**
- **The Chicago Botanic Garden Antiques & Garden Fair: April 2007; Chicago Botanic Garden, Glencoe, IL. Call 847-835-5440 or see www.chicagobotanic.org.**
- **The New York Botanical Garden Antique Garden Furniture Show and Sale: April 2007; The New York Botanical Garden, Bronx, NY. Call 718-817-8700 or see www.nybg.org.**
- **Heart of Country Antiques Show: September 27-30, 2006, Gaylord Texan hotel, Grapevine, TX; and March 1-3, 2007, Gaylord Opryland hotel, Nashville, TN. Call 800-862-1090 or see www.heartofcountry.com.**
- **Annual Garden and Architectural Elements Auction: Bonhams & Butterfield, March 2007; 220 San Bruno Ave., San Francisco, CA. Call 415-861-7500 or see www.bonhams.com.**
- **For more shows and a list of exhibitors, call 212-255-0020 or see www.stellashows.com.**

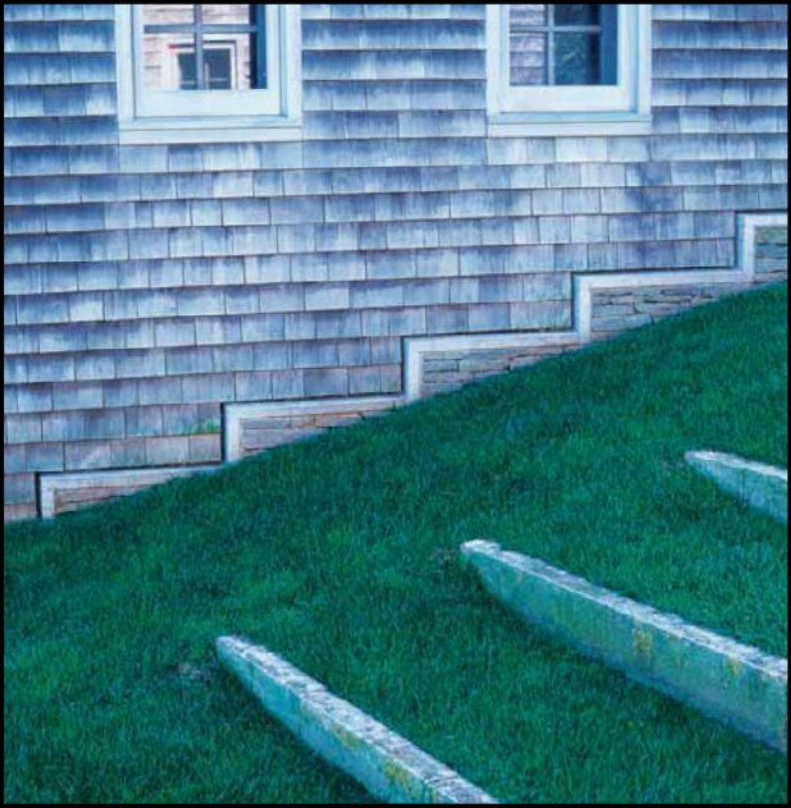


BY JOANNA FORTNAM

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROGER FOLEY

portfolio: Edwina von Gal

EAST HAMPTON-BASED LANDSCAPE DESIGNER EDWINA VON GAL HAS CREATED A NUMBER OF GARDENS, MOST on Long Island, New York, that rank among the best in America. She balances contradictory qualities. As with many successful landscape designers, her work has evolved out of a close collaboration with and respect for architecture, yet she places emphasis on nature. She is a modest presence, erasing signs of ego from her work, yet her style is highly recognizable and distinct. Her gardens aspire to simplicity, yet the discipline and detail involved in their creation are exhaustive. Von Gal recently announced plans to take a sabbatical to concentrate on public-scale reforestation work and a landscape for a Frank Gehry-designed museum, both in Panama. This portfolio focuses on her career to date and her low-key but dramatic style.



PORTRAIT OF A DESIGNER

"I began as a garden designer partly through forced labor as a child—Dad grew vegetables; Mom was a garden club member. It's genetic.

"Through my work for a property developer, I dealt with architects, designers and clients all the time, so I understood the business. I gravitated toward gardens, but I didn't like what I call the 'random acts of planting, plant-and-shoot' school of garden design. I felt that architecture is what everything in the landscape has to relate to, and I grew my business out of an association with architects.

"I aim to create gardens that provide the feeling of a beautiful place to be, not just something you look at from the house. I always make sure there is a place to stay and be 'here' for a while."

TOP LEFT: KATHRYN COOK

"I aim to create the feeling of a beautiful place



Top left: Edwina von Gal in the Azuero peninsula of Panama where she will be working on the landscape for the Gehry-designed Museum of Biodiversity and various reforestation projects. Left: Real steps felt too heavy for this well-used area of sloping lawn, so von Gal set French limestone risers into the grass that echo the steplike detailing on the wall. Above: A rectangular decked pool with a raised, shaded platform is seemingly carved out of mugo pines and bayberry. Acres of meadow grow right up to the decking.

to be, not just something you look at from the house"



EDGES & SPACES

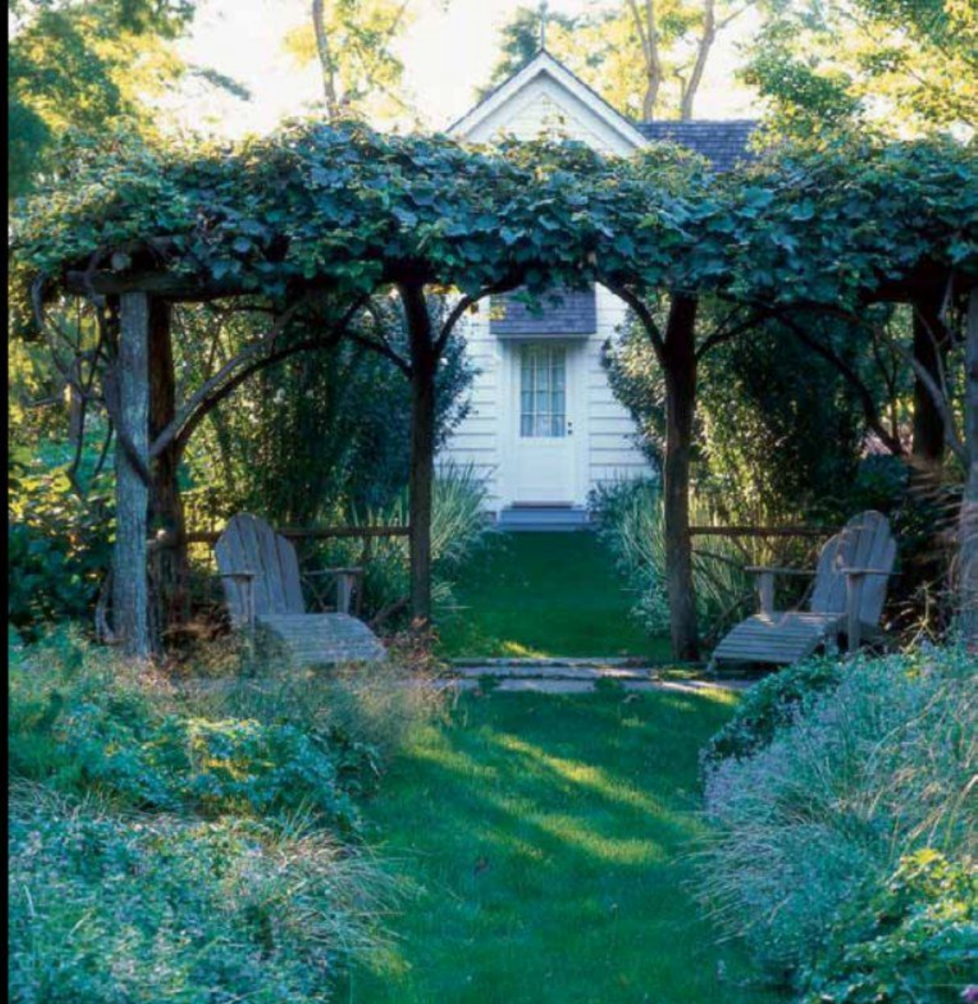
Two wild choke cherries were the only notable trees on this property when von Gal arrived. She cleared away weeds and added more cherries to serve as replacements when the originals decline. The low wall of Pennsylvania flagstone runs between the trees to quietly but firmly draw attention to them and to reinforce the contrast between mown lawn and wild meadow.

"I wouldn't say that low stone walls are a signature, but they have worked for me in certain situations. They have a usefulness in defining a separation of spaces. Edges are always difficult—I am concerned not to be obvious. In moving from one space to the next, you want the spaces to be distinct but the transition to be a subtle event."



PLACES TO BE





Pond life "I love to build ponds —they're a direct way to create that sense of peaceful fascination, yet be really engaged with the garden at the same time."

Von Gal works from aerial photographs to understand the orientation and shape of the glacial ponds typical of this area and then builds using a clay bonded fabric that gives a far more natural result than a plastic liner (above and right).

Pond edges are planted with pontederia, sagittaria and irises, together with masses of juncus and scirpus to give a textured, soft margin that merges seamlessly with the distant landscape.

The example at right borders a wetland preserve. Von Gal set out to create the impression that just enough trees had been cleared from the landscape to create space for the buildings, even though nothing, including the pond, existed prior.



"Trees create light and shade which is





Over view A pergola built from posts of black locust (center) supports a couple of ancient grape vines found on the site. The chaises face a double border that includes many grasses to create a "mini meadow" effect that merges appropriately with the distant view of field and water.

"One of my guiding principles is that you should be able to look out from the house and what you see should be appropriate. And it should work in reverse—I do a lot of running back and forth to check."

Tree spirit An overgrown tangle of weed trees (top right) was cleaned up and crisply accentuated with a setting of mown and unmown lawn.

"I'm very much about making people notice trees and suddenly see something they've never noticed before—the bark, a sculptural form. I'm not so much about using trees as design tools—I want to make the rest of the landscape claim the trees rather than the other way round."



so important for pulling people through a landscape"



portfolio: Edwina von Gal



LIGHT & SHADE

In this front garden von Gal deliberately downplayed the details that say "swimming pool" in favor of creating a water feature that would look good all year. Russian olive trees (*Elaeagnus umbellata*) dip and touch the water in the breeze, and the absence of paving, skimmers, steps, coping or waterline tiles diverts attention from the pool's function, placing emphasis on the interaction of light and water. The water is the same depth throughout, another touch that subtly undermines the conventional.

NATURE

"People say they can recognize my gardens, but I try to take myself out of the picture—you don't need another ego in that architect/client/nature mix. I see myself as the bridge between the architecture and the natural context.

"I guess my gardens are recognizable in their 'lessness' rather than their 'moreness.' What I do involves a lot of editing, but I don't necessarily want it to show."

Bird watch One client found her winter garden so depressing that she didn't want to visit the house after summer's end. Von Gal created this grove of 'Winter King' hawthorns as an antidote—the trees are covered in berries in fall and winter, and the underplanting of hair grass (deschampsia) when backlit by low winter sun creates an ethereal mist. "Birdbaths are a great way to encourage people to observe their garden at a small scale. But I only use platform feeders or baths; I never hang bird feeders in trees."



"I try to take myself out of the picture—I guess my gardens are recognizable in their 'lessness' rather than their 'moreness'"





Simple things Native vegetation and its seasonal changes—goldenrod in late summer—come right up to the house walls (both left).

"Nature makes things simple, and I like gardens that don't look like they're a lot of work. But I'm not a minimalist—it can be taken too far. I'm simplistic rather than minimalist. If I were really a minimalist, people would say, 'Edwina: She doesn't ever plant flowers'—and I don't want to be a 'don't-ever' designer."

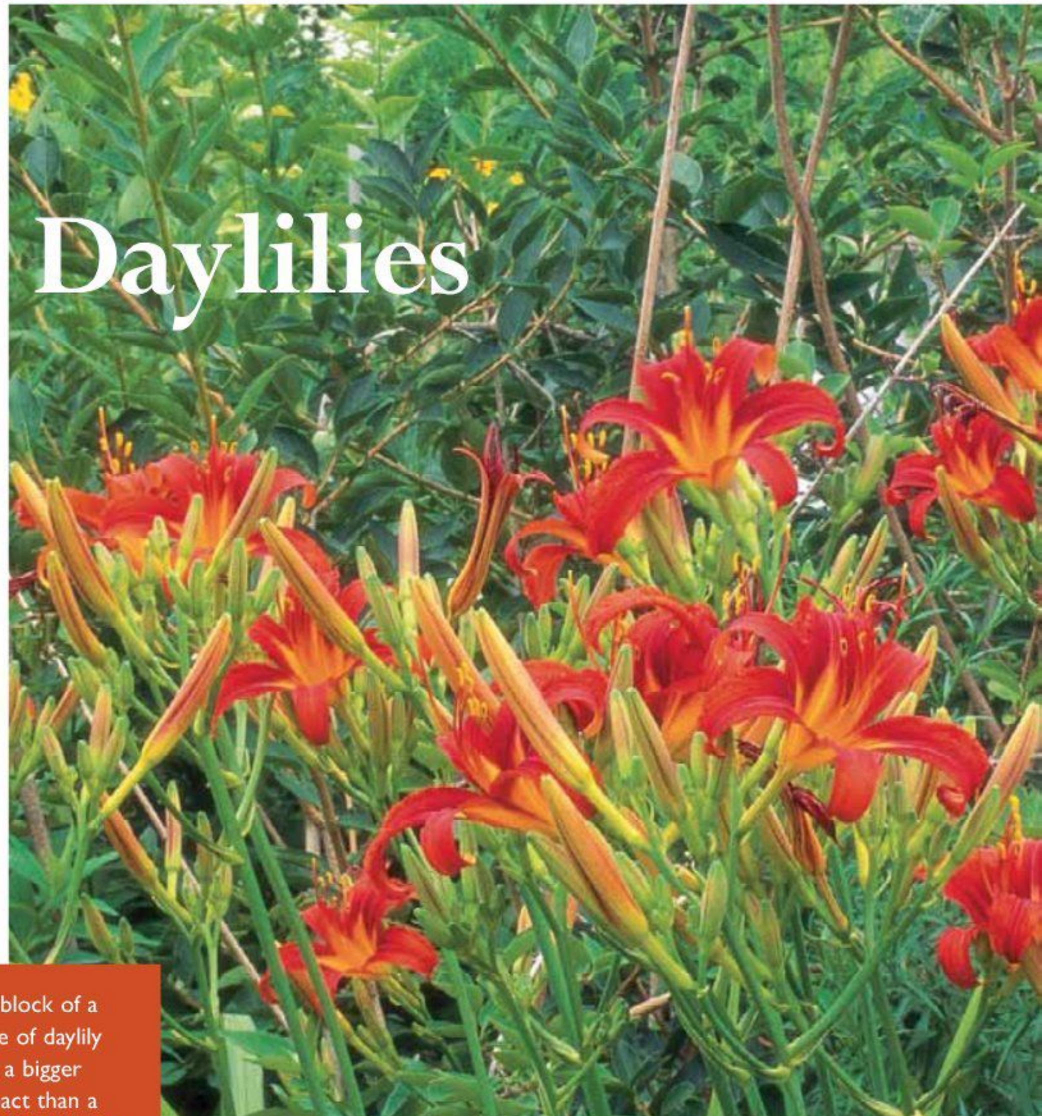
In play A pair of swings designed by architect Kate Gormley appears to be suspended from high in an arch of leafy wisteria (right).





HORT Q & A WITH JACK RUTTLE

Dazzling Daylilies



A sizable block of a single type of daylily will make a bigger color impact than a mix of cultivars which vary in color, height and bloom time.

SUSAN A. ROTH

Q *I've started collecting daylilies for my perennial garden, but I find that even after several years they are not making the bold color statements I had hoped for. What can I do?* — MIRANDA BUSSO, RICHMOND, VA

A To get powerful impact from daylilies, it's important to plant large blocks of just one variety. The height and color of leaves, blooming time and the height at which the flowers are held above the leaves vary a great deal in daylilies. Variations between cultivars can dilute the impact even of a planting devoted to just one color.

The first step toward a bolder daylily display is to separate your varieties. Dig all of them out of the patch, selecting the strongest growers or your favorites. Then divide your selections and replant in blocks of just one kind. The minimum should be a new patch of at least three large clumps (for an area about 5 feet across). Move any plants that don't fit your color scheme or are not ready to divide to a nursery area somewhere out of the way. As the plantings among your perennials mature, keep enlarging them with divisions (or purchases) until you get the impact you are after.

Q *I'm an architecture student and would like to know what training I'll need to become a garden designer.* — STEVEN YOUNG, LOS ANGELES

A Most successful garden designers working today come from training in either landscape architecture or horticulture. Your background in architecture can certainly prove to be a great asset.

There are no clear-cut professional requirements for garden designers as there are for landscape architects. (To become a registered landscape architect, you would need to spend several years after graduation apprenticed to a licensed practitioner and also pass an exam.)

Keep in mind the standard rap that you may hear: Landscape architects aren't trained to know plants, and horticulturists aren't trained to know design. Both complaints have kernels of truth, but I think that the skills you learn in architecture (site analysis, aesthetic and design principles, draftsmanship) are as important as plantsmanship. Most entry-level garden-design jobs are with landscaping firms and high-quality nurseries where other people can help select plants once a design is in hand.

To advance in landscape design, you will probably need to learn a lot more about plants, and sooner rather than later. Before you graduate, try to take any classes you can

When bright flowers bloom, parchment crumbles, my words fade, the pen has dropped—MORPHEUS



in subjects like garden history, garden design and horticulture. See if you can land part-time work that has something to do with plants and design, for example, in a nursery or with a landscaper or designer.

For more information, check out the websites of the American Society of Landscape Architects (www.asla.org) and the Association of Professional Landscape Designers (www.apld.com).

Q *I want to cover a large, steep and sunny bank with creeping junipers. What types should*

I plant, how should I plant them and what can I do to keep weeds from growing through? — ALICE LOCAZIO, FORT COLLINS, CO

A A very low-growing juniper like the popular *Juniperus horizontalis* 'Blue Rug' and 'Bar Harbor' or *J. procumbens* 'Nana' will spread to make a mat 4 or 5 feet across. But at planting time you should set the plants much closer, 18 to 20 inches apart. These varieties grow very slowly, and if you set them too far apart, they won't make a good ground cover for many years. To help prevent erosion, align the rows so that they angle across the slope, rather than straight up and down.

A number of other juniper cultivars will also work quite well. Stick to those that promise to stay under a foot tall, such as Icee Blue™, 'Prince of Wales', Moor-Dense™ or 'Alpine Carpet'.

To protect against weeds, once the foliage has covered the ground, you'll find that hoeing is impossible and mulches are ineffective. Avoid using landscape fabric "weed barriers" because eventually organic matter accumulates on the top, allowing weeds to sprout and grow down through it; once that

Ornamental trees like crabapples, such as 'Red Jewel' (below), can create the look of an orchard without the high maintenance that fruit trees require.



SUSAN A. ROTH

happens you can't pull the weeds without ripping or dislodging the fabric. The best way to prevent weeds in a juniper planting like this is to apply preemergent weed killers like Treflan in early spring. Any weeds that appear afterward will have to be pulled by hand. Do this promptly to prevent annual weeds from reseeding and perennial weeds from developing root systems mature enough to regenerate.

Q *On either side of my long driveway, I'd like to create the look of an orchard. Can you suggest some fruit trees that are easy to care for?*
— EDWARD KRUCEK, LAFAYETTE, IN

A Keeping fruit trees healthy takes a lot of skill and hard work. If you are serious about a home orchard, check with local nurseries and the extension service for varieties that do well in your area, that is, attract few pests, demand minimal pruning, etc.

If you are more interested in the grid-like "look of an orchard," keep in mind that there are many ornamental trees, most notably crabapples and flowering cherries, with the form of fruit trees but no usable fruit. These are more likely to have the easy-care quality you are seeking.

Crabapples are especially beautiful in spring and have a delicious fragrance. The best of them have tiny apples in red, orange or gold that last into early winter, which almost makes up for the lack of fall foliage color. The only real drawback is that crabapples are afflicted with several serious diseases, so it's crucial to find one that is resistant to the main diseases in your area. For where you live, I recommend varieties that are resistant to scab, fireblight and mildew: 'Prairie Fire', 'Red Jewel' or 'White Angel'.

My top pick for a purely ornamental orchard-type tree is 'Kwanzan' Japanese flowering cherry, which produces masses of dazzling, frilly double pink flowers and has superb fall color. For something a little more subdued, consider one of its paler flowered cousins, like 'Shirotae' or 'Shogetsu'.

Whichever tree you pick, reinforce the orchard look by sticking to just one variety. The uniformity in shape and color will intensify the impact of your planting grid.

CASE STUDY

A Family Garden

RAISING SMALL CHILDREN AND A BIG DOG, ALLISON WRIGHT AND ANDY KAPLAN WERE content with a swing set, a cedar deck and a playhouse in this garden on the west side of Los Angeles. In the blink of an eye, they knew, those swings could come down, and the supporting structure would become an arbor—wisteria vines had already started up its posts. The cedar deck was a favorite dog-napping spot, while the playhouse served as a fort, a club, a hideout from Mom and Dad. "Our goal was to make the outdoors as usable and flexible as it could be," explains Russ Cletta, a Venice, California, landscape architect, who, with his partner Jay Griffith, designed Wright and Kaplan's garden to be "dog-and-child friendly, with lots of options for adults."



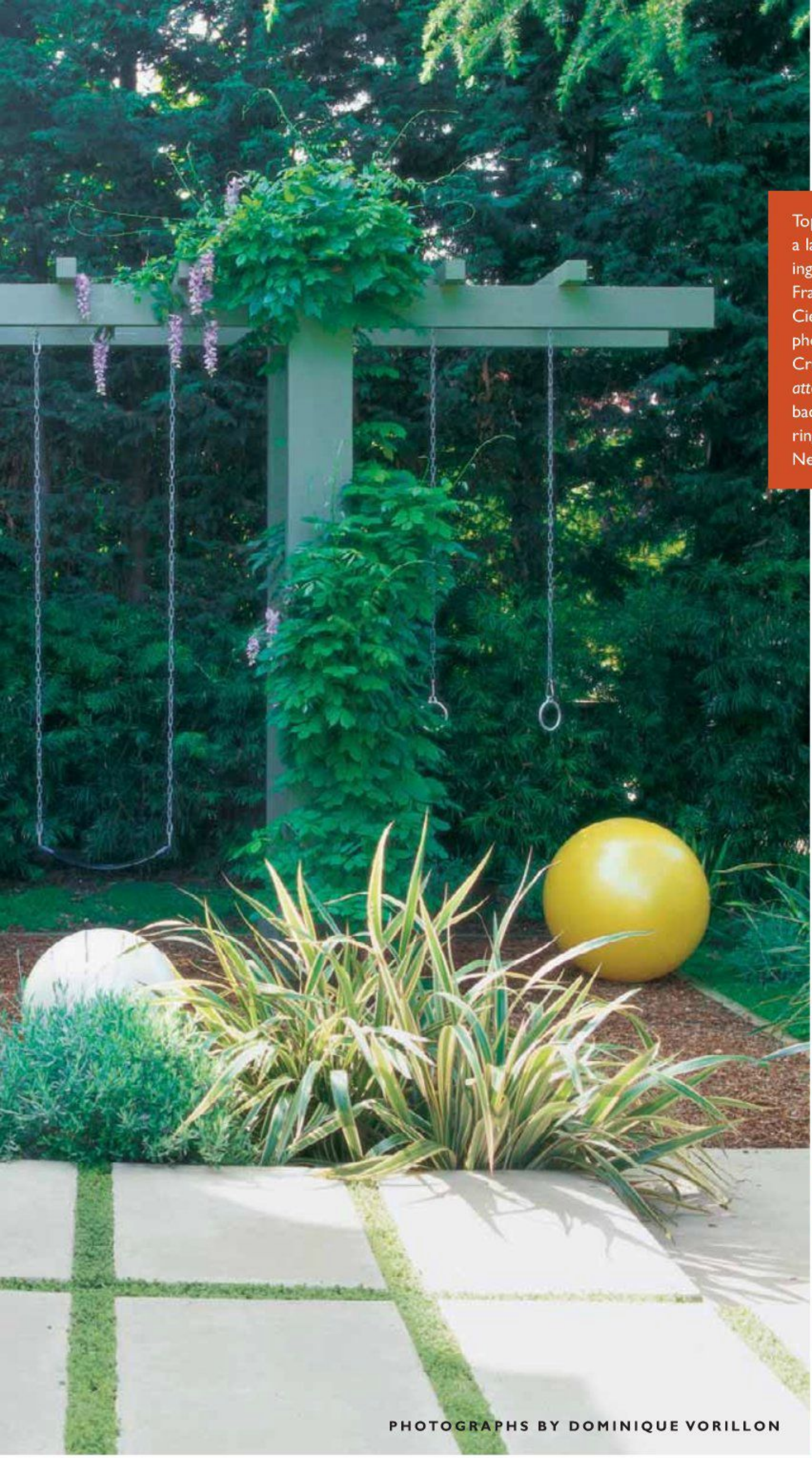
A front courtyard is ideal for watching kids on swings, but its concrete bench can double as lounger or table. Its leafy scrim, a mix of phormiums and 'Forest Pansy' redbuds against a hedge, blocks the street while creating a green view for the living room. But in contrast to its paved restraint—it's like a well-behaved garden lounge—there's a wilder scene behind the house, beyond the deck: a fanciful woods of citrus, mayten and leptospermum with a bark path that curves around lavenders and seems to disappear. With a similar intent—to make the small lot appear endless—Griffith and Cletta planted its edges with the same eucalyptus that grows in nearby yards, so the "borrowed" trees are part of the picture.

When the designers arrived in 1999, Wright and Kaplan had owned their home, a pared-down, early-'90s-style house converted to a more contemporary design, for two years. Wright and Susan Minter, a London-based friend, had already redone the inside, changing windows, floors and finishes, replacing a kitchen wall with glass doors and generally lightening up the living space and tying it to the outside. Minter, an



Left: Tucked away in the garden out of sight of the house, the playhouse encourages creativity. Right: A wisteria arbor doubles as a swing set, with herbs and phormium dividing the play area from lounge space. *Sedum brevifolium* fills the seams between concrete paving.

We don't stop playing because we grow old; we grow old because we stop playing—GEORGE BERNARD SHAW



PHOTOGRAPHS BY DOMINIQUE VORILLON

Top: Susan Minter replaced a lawn with a spacious dining deck. Table by Randy Frank; chairs from Janus et Cie. Below: Bronze phormium, 'Goodwin Creek' lavender and *Agave attenuata* 'Nova' against a backdrop of blue westringia and pink and red New Zealand tea trees.





architectural designer, had even swapped an unused side lawn for a deck, where Wright, who has a master's degree in psychology, and Kaplan, a TV executive, would often dine *en famille*.

But the garden didn't work for the family. Overly fussy, the entry court featured a series of slate ramps, steps and walls between the street and the front door. More walls and sprawling plants blocked views from the windows. And the side deck, though sleek, was devoid of green and unconnected to a raised rear terrace. "We had to unify the parts," says Cletta, "and pull the strong, minimalist lines of the blocky house into the landscape."

They replaced the slate with a clean grid of concrete pavers in the courtyard, planting sedum in the seams. In the adjoining space, they gave their arbor-cum-swing-set a soft, chipped-bark floor beneath and ran a low shrub border between the two, full of rosemary, lavender and 'Gold Sword' phormium. Beside the deck, they cut a long bed and packed it with fortnight lilies (*Dietes bicolor*), tough plants that could take the shade of a neighbor's deodar cedars. And they linked deck and terrace by planting mayten trees on both and letting prostrate rosemary spill from upper to lower levels, obscuring the wall that divides them.

Up above they granted Wright's request for a "small jungle," mixing colors from the rest of the garden—rust, blue, olive green and chartreuse—into a dreamy pastiche of spiked, tumbling and overhanging plants. Westringia, phormium, agave and lavender, all drought-tolerant and low-maintenance, weave together under the trees, along the path that finally ends at the playhouse, a simple version of the big house. "Children love having places to hide," says Wright, who is tolerant of the youthful impulse to smear paint on playhouse walls.

They're only young once is the implication. Let them have their piece of earth. The family has since moved into bigger digs, again with the design assistance of Susan Minter and Cletta and Griffith .—**SUSAN HEEGER**

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LANDSCAPE SOLUTIONS

Walls That Beckon





[1] Steel industrial remnants set at angles at a Berkeley Asian-themed garden and Craftsman-style home mimic a Japanese shoji screen. [2] Computer motherboards strung together with cable ties. "Beats sending them to China, where they're melted down to recover the metals inside," Watts says. [3] A billboard-collaged wall runs along a path behind a Berkeley midcentury modern studio once belonging to famed movie critic Pauline Kael.

"EVERY WALL IS A DOOR," SAID RALPH WALDO Emerson. Nowhere is this more evident than in gardens where walls and fences function as more than mere separators of space—even beckoning visitors for a closer look rather than obstructing them.

Artist-turned-garden-designer Shirley Watts, of Alameda, California, has more than a few multifunctioning, whimsical walls to her credit, which often are created using salvaged materials, or "foraged urban archeology" as she likes to say. One of her funkiest involves 5,000 mussel shells sandwiched between wire mesh and mounted to a black steel screen.

According to Watts, no matter how ornamental the design, a wall by its very nature cannot exist strictly aesthetically. "As soon as you put the wall up," she says, "you've changed the space."

However, that strict utilitarian function doesn't seem to get her down.

"I've learned from the art world that you can't be timid," she says. "While 50 mussel shells have no meaning, 5,000 of them make a statement."—**JASON UPRIGHT**

■ *Shirley Alexandra Watts Garden Design and Installation: 510-521-5223; sawattsdesign.com.*

SHIRLEY WATTS



A fence lasts three years, a dog lasts three fences, a horse lasts three dogs, and a man lasts three horses—GERMAN PROVERB

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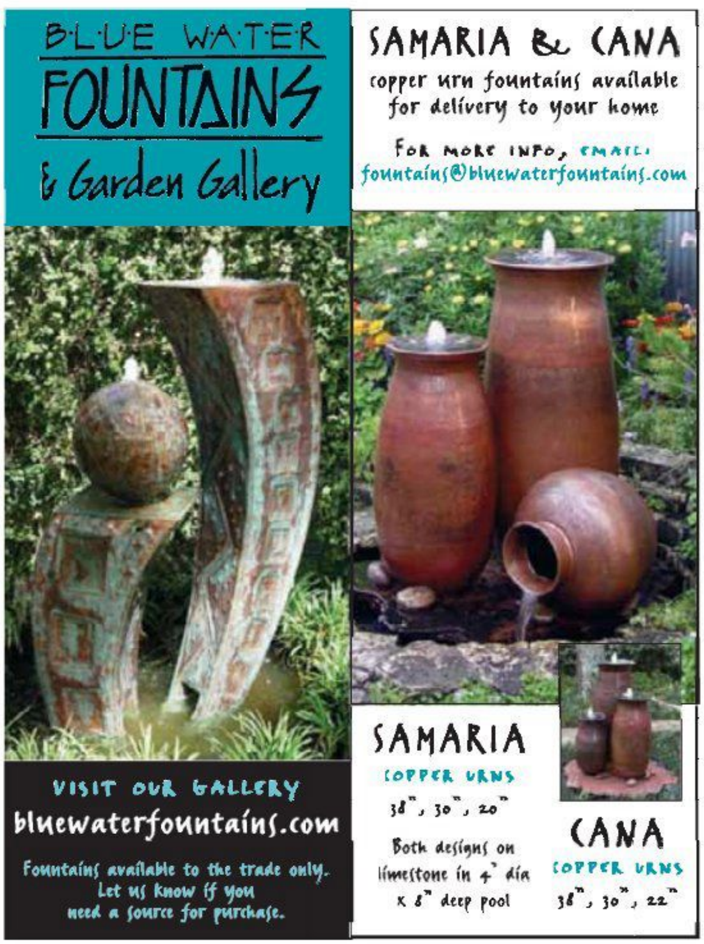
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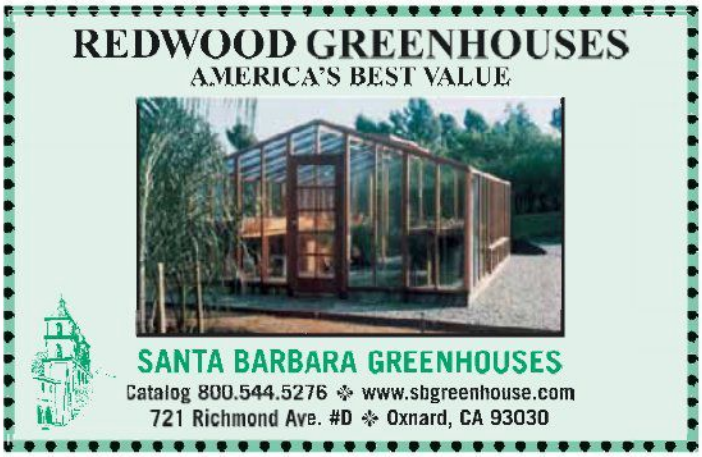

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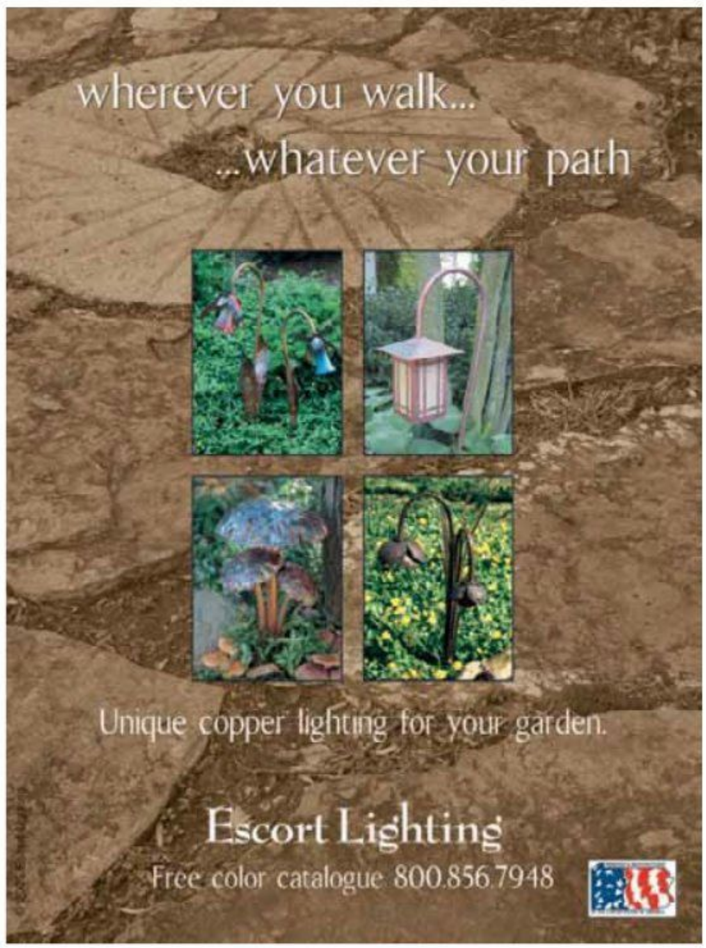

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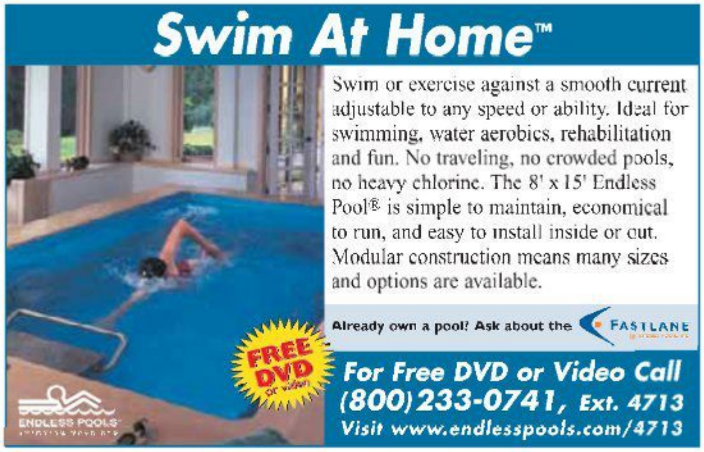

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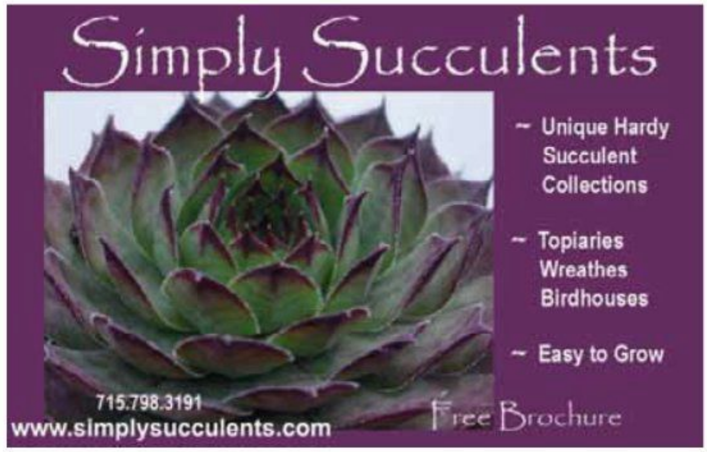

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Drift On

Washed-up pieces of driftwood, smoothed and silvered by their long journey by sea and river, are an inspiration to artist and furniture maker Ben Forgey. He created this rustic rocking chair and side table for the garden of landscape architect James van Sweden, on Chesapeake Bay.

A family friend since the artist was 4 years old, Van Sweden placed the chair on his deck where he can watch the sun set over the flat bay landscape with its waving grasses.

Forgey's eye for what he calls "left-behind" materials also extends to sculptures made from shredded tires he finds on the highways of New Mexico.—**JF**

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As two floating planks meet and part on the sea, O friend! So I met and then drifted from thee—WILLIAM R. ALGER









